The Secrets of the Self

(English Rendering of Iqbal's Asrar-i-Khudi)

By

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PREFACE

During Iqbal's centenary celebrations in 1977, unfortunately for me, I remained confined to a hospital bed. Convalescence, however, provided me with opportunity to browse through some renderings of Iqbal. One of these was the celebrated prose translation of the Asrar-e-Khudi by Prof. R. A. Nicholson. A translation of a poem in prose, however accurate, does not reflect the poetic beauty and appeal of the original. A tendency to paraphrase is visible in such prose translations. But a translator into verse is always himself a poet. Earlier, I had attained some measure of success in capturing and conveying the spirit of the original Punjabi poetic compositions of Sultan Bahoo and Baba Farid. This spurred me to undertake a versified translation of the Asrar-e-Khudi before the centenary year of Iqbal ran out. Nine years later it has been through at least as many revisions at my own hands.

I would have changed the title of the book from 'The Secrets of the Self' but for the international acceptance of the word 'secret' for the word 'Asrar'. I would have preferred any of the words 'faculties' or 'potentialities' or simply the 'ways' -- which would have served to convey the latent powers of the Self on the development of which Iqbal's entire philosophy rests. But I advised myself against a challenge to the old established.

I chose the Victorian verse form for two reasons. The first was the form of the unmatched Persian original. I wished to attempt to put across to the English knowing readers what I have been able to understand of

the Masnavi (or the long poem), retaining the taste of Persian and the oriental simile, metaphor, flourishes of language and its peculiar references, as far as possible My second reason was that in the East the versified form still remains dominant by far despite present attempts at free-verse and prose-poems in Persian, Urdu and other oriental languages of the East. This is a tradition very deep rooted in the literary tradition of the East It is only in the second half of the present century that versified form of poetry has lost currency in the West. But they, too, cannot disown the wealth of thousands of years of rhymed and balanced poetry. English is an international language. If the idiom has changed in a part of the world that part is smaller population-wise. My rendering is meant for the dominant part both in form and content, for I know, they still care. For them and those others who may be the inquisitive type are meant the brief notes to the translation.

Prof. Nicholson, the first and the earliest translator, had the double advantage of reading the Masnavi with Principal Shafi of the Oriental College in Lahore and of consulting Iqbal himself He wrote the following about the literalness of this translation

> "To European readers the Asrar-e-Khudi presents certain obscurities which no translation can entirely remove These lie partly in the form and would not be felt, as a rule by any conversant with Persian poetry. Often, however, the ideas themselves, being associated with peculiarly Oriental ways of thinking, are hard for our minds to follow. I am not sure that I have always grasped the mean-

ing or rendered it correctly."

And again:

> "The artistic quality of the poem is remarkable when we consider that its language is not the author's own. I have done my best to preserve as much of this as a literal prose translation would allow".

Being an Easterner, I am not very much up against the peculiar difficulties of Prof. Nicholson. But my task is thrice more uphill. The language of the original and of the translation are not my own. I have attempted a versified rendering in an effort to convey as much of its literal merit, diction, metaphor as possible for me. Whereever I felt that my rendering falls short of the meaning, I have used words in brackets, scattered here and there, which though additional to the text are only explanatory. Instances of words put in brackets and used merely for rhyme scheme are barely half a dozen. Same is the case with archaic words. These are like old tried friends who can be summoned and relied upon in times of need.

The two rhyming lines of the original have been rendered by me in stanzas of four lines each, of which the second and fourth rhyme. Typed in two lines, the form would have accorded with the original. The metre, however, is not consistent. It varies. Somehow I varied it unconsciously as the tempo of the original took hold of me. Later, during revisions, when I became conscious of this, I let it remain as it had come. A little irregularity in this respect may be sufferable in

some quarters at a time when regular verse is not acceptable at all these days in some others

This translation is meant more for the English knowing Easterner than for the Westerners. But even for the latter, lapse of nearly 70 years after the first appearance of the book has opened much wider vistas of understanding the Eastern languages and minds. The impact of the Second World War, the United Nations Organization and the breath-taking scientific advancements have built bridges across remotest of countries and brought man nearer to man. Chinese and Arabic languages stand shoulder to shoulder with English, French and Spanish in all the world forums. So the language as well as the thoughts of the Orient are no longer as complex for the West as these were to Prof. Nicholson and his contemporaries. Moreover, Iqbal is no longer merely an audacious thinker of the beginning of this century but a recognized philosopher-poet of world renown His words and thoughts, therefore, require to be communicated in their literalness which carry nuances and shades of meanings worthy of serious notice Prof. Nicholson's translation of the Asrar-e-Khudi is admirable I leave it to the readers to judge for themselves how far my translation reflects Iqbal's thought, poetic greatness and the grandeur of his diction and style.

Maqbool Elahi

INTRODUCTION

In my woods, there is no dearth
Of timber green or dry
A pulpit if it would not shape
I make of it a cross!

Naziri Neshapu

As the world-illuming sun ambushed
The night on its way
My weeping sprinkled on the cheek
Of the rose its dewy ray

Sleep from the eye of narcissus
My tears washed away
My passion wakened the foliage
And made it grow and sway

The gardener tested the power of
My poetry on the clay
He sowed a hemi-stitch but reaped
A sword, (not flowers gay)[1]

He, in the garden did not plant
But one seed of my tear
With warp and weft of my lament
He wove the garden's wear

A particle am I, radiance mine
The luminous sun envies
A hundred dawns lie in my bosom
Eager for release

My dust is far far brighter than
[2] King Jamshid's famous cup
(For), it knows well yet-unborn things
In (this) world's whole set-up

Already hunted has my thought
And from my saddle slung
The deer that has not as yet
From non-existence sprung.

My garden stands embellished by
The foliage yet unborn
I carry flowers in my skirt
Yet branches don't adorn

Musicians' concert scattered I
Their meeting did disperse
I struck the plectrum on string-veins
Of the Universe.

Because the lute of my genius,
Has in it melody rare
My comrade even of my song,
Is sorely unaware.

I am the sun that's newly born
In this world (old and vast)
I hav'nt learnt the ways and laws
Of skies (swirling fast)

The stars have not yet taken flight
Before my splendour great
My quick-silver is static yet
Its stirring does await

Deprived of dancing light of mine
Is ocean (vast and deep)
And mountain(s) from my henna's hue
At distance themselves keep

With me are not familiar yet
Existence and life's eyes
Fearing I may expose myself
I, shaking, trembling, rise.

My roof received the rays of the sun
And broke the (spell of) night
And fresh dew settled on the rose
(Making the world so spright.)

I lie in wait for votaries
Who rise at early morn
How happy shall be the worshippers
Of fire within me born.

I am the song indifferent
To any plectrum strokes
I am the voice melodious of
To-morrow's poet, (folks!)

My age is sorely ignorant
Of the mysteries deep
My [3] Joseph is not meant for
This market which is cheap

Despaired am I of my friends
Who stood by me in the past
My Sinai's all akindle
That Moses may come (fast).

So calm and noiseless like the dew
Is the ocean of my friends
Whereas my dew is turbulent
Like the stormy ocean's (trends.)

My song('s inspiration) is
From different world than this
(My) bell on.other caravans
(Confers for march a bliss.)

Full many a poet truly great
After his death is born
He closed his eyes but opened ours
(To strive for a better morn).

Drew forth again from nothingness
Coquetish fare and ware
So very like a rose's rise
From its own dark grave's layer.

Full many a caravan has crossed
Although this desert bare
Like camel's softly falling steps
They passed without fun, fair.

A lover am I and crying is
My very faith and creed
The din of Judgement Day is but
A minion mine, indeed!

A song am I the flow of which
Exceeds the range of the chord
And fear not I that lute of mine
Shall break up in discord.

The water drop may better remain
Aloof from flood of mine
And ocean deep be better mad
Than face its fury ('s line)

My Oman is of such expanse
No river shall contain
And many seas to hold my storm
Shall have to fully strain

Unless a bud with moisture
Blooms into a garden whole
It does'nt deserve the sprinkling from
My spring-cloud('s bounteous dole)

And in my soul are lightnings
Restful and sound asleep
The mountains and the deserts are
Within my easy sweep.

A hold you try with my sea
If you are a desert ('s span)
If Sinai, then try, receive
My lightning if you can.

The Fount of Life is wholly mine
I drink from it at will
All mysteries of my life have been
Unfolded to my fill

The spark of dust was made alive
By my enkindling song
It turned into a fire-fly
Unfolding wings (flew 'long.)

No one divulged the secrets
That I have dared to do
Like thoughts of mine did ever pierce
The pearl of meanings through?

Life Everlasting's mystery
You wish to seek then come!
If you desire the conquest of
Both world and heaven, come!

The old revolving heaven has
These secrets to me told
It unbecomes of me to hide
From my comrades old

Arise, O Saqi! Pour the wine
Into my (empty) cup
Vexations all heaped up by Time
From heart of mine clear up

The sparkle of the water which
From [4] Zam Zam gushes out
Makes of the beggar-worshippers
Jamshid, (there is no doubt)

It makes the thinking faculty
(More sober), more alert
And wakeful eyes it makes to be
More watchful (and expert)

And mountain's status it confers
On mere weightless straw
And makes the weakling foxes
The strength of lions draw

On humble dust it sure bestows
The height of Pleiades
Vastness of sea to a water-drop
It gives, if it may please.

The silence deep it turns into
The clamour of Judgement Day
The foot of partridge scarlet-red
With hawk's blood make it may.

Arise! And pour into my cup
This pure and sparkling wine
And let the full moon shed its beams
On thoughts' dark night of mine.

That I may lead to journey's end
Those who did wander away
Instil impatience in their sight
To see its scenic sway.

That I may be in hot pursuit
Of quest another, new
And be acquainted with the thrill
Of aim, desire new

For people having taste and verve
Eyes' pupil I may be
And sink in ears of the Universe
Like voice, grant this to me!

That I may raise the value of,
The worth of Poesy
By sprinkling tears from my eyes
On its herbs dry that be

Inspired by the living bliss
Of Murshid mine of Rum
I may rehearse the sealed book
Of Secret Sciences' bloom.

His soul is like a magazine
Of ever bruning flame
Whereas I'm but a fleeting spark
That gleams only in name.

The burning candle me the moth
Reduce to ashes did
And liquor led a raid upon
My goblet (, flask and lid).

My Preceptor from [5] Rum has turned
My clay into pure gold
While from my dust he raised aloft
Perspectives to behold.

A grain of sand from desert bare
Packed up and then set forth
To catch in hand the ray of the sun
(What aim! What daring worth!)

A mere wave, his ocean vast
My destination is
That I may dive to bottoms deep
For glistening pearl of his

The (lowly) I, who drunken get
From (his liquor,) his wine
With only his breath I sustain
Entire life mine

Last night, my heart was aching
To cry, to lament
The all-pervading silence was
With cries of "My Lord!" rent.

With sorrows sore of this world
I groaned and I complained
Bewailing emptiness of cup
(From eyes my tears rained)

(They flowed and poured and rained and rained)
Till eyes could bear no more
Bereft of all endurance then
In sleep they found their shore

My [6] Master – moulded – truth itself –
Exposed to me his face
Who in the Persian language
Rendered Quranic grace

Said he "O lover of men of love'
To madness's extent
Take just one sip of wine, pure
(Bubbling with love's ferment)

On your heart strike you should
The din like Judgement Day's
The goblet dash on your head
Into knife your eyes' gaze.

Your smile let be the capital of,
The source of laments' vent
And with you blood-red tears let
The hearts of men be rent

How long will you be silent, mute
Like bud ('s unopened lips)
Sell for a song your sweet-smell
Like roses' (early nip)

Like (fragrance-yielding) rue seeds
You dance, when burnt, in pain
Tie your litter right on the head
Of fire, flaming plain.

And finally, much like a bell
From body's every part
The silent lament lying within
Finds tongue and tollings start.

You're fire itself, take courage
Set fire to the Universe
Like you are burning, burn others
(For better or for worse)

Proclaim aloud the mysteries of
The old taverneer
Be like the ripple of wine and then
The robe of crystal wear.

Be a shattering stone for the mirror of
False apprehension, fear,
Right in the middle of down-town
Smash goblet, (O my dear!).

From bed of reeds like a reed-flute
Proclaim the message clear
The message of the tribe of Hay[7]
To Qais, (their maiden's lover)

Invent a style entirely new
For giving vent to pains
Enliven this assemblage
With cries and piercing strains.

Arise! Bestow a life fresh
On every living soul
With "Qum!" Arise! Mere breathing ones
Make live life full and whole!

Arise and force your feet to walk
On paths (and pastures) new
Throw off your head past passions
Old melancholy eschew

Acquainted be with the delight
Of lively lovely speech
O bell of caravan! Awake!
(Through tolling marching teach)"

This exhortation set aflame
My (body, soul and) cloak
Wine-like, my being swelled with
Emotions fain would choke.

I struck my chord and there emerged
A music soft and sweet
With it I furnished Paradise
For ears' joyous treat

And then the veil I took off
The Mystery of the Self
Exposed have I the secret of
The miracle of the Self.

The imprint of my Being was
But (sketchy) incomplete
Repulsive – (ugly), worthless
With uselessness replete.

Love formed and shaped and chiselled
To mould me into a man
And thus I gained the knowledge of,
The Universe, (Allah's Plan).

The sinews which revolve the skies
Their movement I have seen
And also in the moon's veins
Blood coursing through so clean.

Full many a night for man-kind
My eyes have shed tears
That I may rend the veil of
Life's mysteries, (hopes and fears)

That from the very focal point
Of possibilities' workshop
I may draw forth the secret of
Life's fabric's weft and warp

I who have beautified this night
So very like the moon
Am but dust of the foot-steps
Of the [8] Radiant Nation ('s moon)

The Nation voice of which resounds
In every vale and dale
Whose newest song enkindles
The fire in hearts (frail)

It sowed an atom but it reaped
Heapful of (brilliant) suns
[9] 'Attar and Rumi were but two
Of hundreds of its sons.

A mere hot sigh though I am
For the heavens I am bound
And even though a mere smoke
Off-spring of fire found.

My pen inspired by the courage
Of my lofty thoughts
The secret of my firmaments
Into the desert casts

So that a mere drop become
Co-equal with the sea
And speck of sand aspire
The desert's expanse to be.

Mere poetry, of this Mathnavi,
Is not at all the aim
Creating idols for worship
Is farthest from its claim.

An [10] Indian am I and, therefore
Of Persian ignorant
My cup is empty, I remain
Much like the moon crescent.

The charm of exposition's style
From me you please not seek
Like the [11] Khansar and Isphahan-born,
I own, I cannot speak

Although the Indian language
Is, no doubt, sugar-sweet
Yet Persian is far sweeter
(And for my purpose meet)

Enchanted by its lovely grace
Has mind of mine become
My pen has turned into the twig
From [12]Sinai's Tree out-come

The loftiness of my thoughts
And Persian stand at par
The nature of my thought it suits
(I must drink at its bar)

O man of sense! I ask of you
Don't criticize the flask
And cheer your heart, (by telling it)
"Taste wine – that is your task"

[1] That character, quality and effect of his poetry is different than that of others' is the import of this stanza. While ordinary poetry is sedateive and luring, in his case the emphasis is on its action-arousing effect.

[2] This [illegible] Persian Emperor is reported to have been in possession of a mysterious bowl in which the whole world was reflected to him. On looking into it he could see and tell what was happending in any corner of the world.

[3] Prophet Joseph was sold as a slave-boy for a trifle.

[4] The perennial spring at Mecca. Its water has healing properties. It gushed forth miraculously when the prophet Ismail, son of Ibrahim (Abraham, the Petriarch) during his infancy, rubbed his heels on the ground due to thirst while some distance away his mother Hajira ran between the two mounts of Safa and Marwa in search of water, both being extremely thirsty in the uninhabited wilderness.

Drinking of water of Zam Zam is one of the musts of the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca.

[5]Jalal-ud-Din Rumi, the universally known Maulana, author of the "Mathnavi Maulana Rumi" Born in 1207 A.D at Balkh he died in 1273 A D and lies buried in Konya in modern Turkey Hence known as Rumi as Anatolia was then known as Rum. He travelled to Baghdad, Mecca, Damascus and other renowned centres of learning till he finally settled down in Konva as a great scholar and professor He turned to mysticism under the enchanting influence of Shamsuddin Tabrizi He founded the Maulavi order of mystics i e. of dancing durvishes

His Mathnavi is reputed to be the "Quran in Persian" He expounded Sufism

Iqbal is a great admirer of Rumi. He takes him to be his preceptor like virgil did Dante Besides reverentially quoting him in most of his works, Iqbal has given him the place of his mentor-guide through Heavens, in his book Javid Nama

Rumi was the greatest mystic poet of the Persian language He believed in Wahdat-ul-Wujud i e. all things are a part of the same entity i.e Allah

[6]Maulana Jalal-ud-Din Rumi

[7]Tribe to which Laila, the beloved of Qais or Majnun belonged.

They are two characters of the most famous romance in the Arabic language The romance has been versified in almost all the languages of the Muslim world

[8]The Muslim nation

[9]Another world-renowned savant

[10]Asrar-i-Khudi was written much earlier than the birth of Pakistan Hence the dreamer of Pakistan called himself on Indian

[11]Two cities of Iran, famous as the place of birth of a number of Persian poets and literary personalities

[12]Sinai's tree "refers to the sacred tree of the scriptures where Moses was shown the light

I

XPOSITION OF THE THEORY THAT ORDER IN HE UNIVERSE ORIGINATES FROM SELF AND HAT THE CONTINUATION OF THE LIFE OF NDIVIDUAL EXISTENCE DEPENDS ON THE SELF

The form of all existence is
Effect alone of the self
What ever you see all around
Are Secrets of the Self.

When the Self itself decided to
Arouse its consciousness
It laid bare to open sight
The world of thoughtfulness.

A hundred worlds lie hidden in
Its (essence and) its being
The Other-than-self is patent from
Self's force in self-confirming.

Thus it has sown in this world
Its opposition's seed
Itself it thus imagines to be
The Other-than-self indeed.

Out of itself it makes and moulds
The forms of other than self
So as to enhance pleasure from
Perpetual strife with self.

It kills and slays with strength of
Its own sinewy arm
So as to be aware of
Its might ('s extensive storm).

Its self-deception means to it
The essence of very life
Like to a rose ablution with
Its blood means life is rife.

For just one rose, it lays waste
A hundred gardens' prune
A hundred lamentations makes
For one melodious tune

For just one sky it brings forth
A hundred crescent moons
A hundred dissertations
For just one letter's (boons)

For all this wastefulness and for
This cruelty multiplied
Creation and perfection of
Soul's beauty is justified

The loveliness of [1] Shirin is
The cause for Farhad's pain
For just one fragrant navel
Musk-deers of [2] Khutan are slain

The fate of moths is constantly
Themselves to immolate
And for this sacrifice unique
The candles compensate

The Self's pen laboured to draw
A hundred circles, lines
To bring into a bold relief
The dawn of Morrow's signs.

A hundred [3] Abrahams consumed
Its many sided flame
So that a lamp be lighted
Of one Mohammad's name.

For purposes of action
It dons so many a gauze
Of subject and of object
Of means and of cause.

It rises, instigates and flies
It glows and it runs
It burns, enkindles and it draws
It dies and breathes (in turns)

The spaciousness of Time
For it arena is
The sky is but a ripple of
The dust of path (of [4] his)

To its rose-culture owes the world
These flowers in button-holes
The night is caused by its sleep
Day by its wakeful goals

Its flame it did split into
The littlest well-lit sparks
And worship of minute details
It taught to Reason ('s clerks)

It split into (invisible) bits
Did atoms thus create
It scattered for the wee-est while
To desert procreate.

Then it became so weary of
Self-scattering might and main
That it, unifying self again,
Turned into a mountain.

To manifest, expose itself
Is the nature of the Self
In every atom lies asleep
The might and main of the Self.

It is the power noiseless
For action ever keen –
But action which has chained by
Causes of action been.

As life of the Universe springs
From the power of the Self
So life rests in proportion
Directly to the Self.

When the drop of water learns by heart
One letter of the Self
Its indigent existence
Turns into the pearl itself.

And wine from weakness of its Self
Is formless and shapeless
For form it begs the favour of
The goblet's shapefulness.

Although the cup of wine assumes
Proportionate beauteous norm
It is beholden to our hands
To come to real form.

On losing its self-consciousness
Turns a mountain into sand
And then complains of ravages of
The flooded river's strand.

A wave is a wave as long as it
Hugs bosom of the sea
It makes itself the rider of
Seas' shoulders, (fast and free).

Light made a halo of itself
To make itself an eye
In search of beauteous forms and scenes
It scanned (this earth and sky.)

When foliage found in its own Self
The wish and will to grow
It rent open the garden's chest
Individual Self to show.

And candle also bound itself
In chains of the Self indeed
Atom on atom piled and piled
Itself it thus did knead

Self-melting when it practised
From itself it escaped
At last it trickled tear-like
From own eyes (in rain draped.)

Had bezel been more solid
In core and natural self
It would'nt have suffered cutting and
(Would'be its real Self.)

It makes a capital out of name
Of other than its own
Its shoulder's galled by burden of
The name by which it's known.

As the earth on its own being
Is firmly soundly based
The moon with ambulation
Perpetually is faced.

However the being of the Sun
Than the earth is stronger far
Hence the earth is mesmerised by
The eyes of the Sun afar

The glory of the red plane-tree
From eyes their batting robs
Its majesty lends grandeur
With which the mountain throbs.

The warp and weft of its raiment
Are spun from threads of fire
Its origin is one seed, alone
Itself which does admire.

As the Self arrays together
The strength and might of life
The little stream of life expands
Into an ocean ('s strife).

[1] The beloved of Farhad in the Persian romantic story of Shirin-Farhad

[2] A province in China famous for its musk-deers

[3] Refers to Namrod's attempt to kill Abraham by throwing him into burning blazing fire.

[4] I.e. the Prophet's who was the paragon of the Self

II

EXPOSITION THAT THE LIFE OF THE SELF ORIGINATES FROM CREATION AND PROCREATION OF OBJECTIVES/IDEALS

Life owes its preservation
To purpose (, goal and aim)
Its caravan's tolling bell reminds
Of your ideal's claim

Life is latent in seeking
Of postures ever new
Its origin lies hidden in
"Desires' (golden hue!)"

Desires and ambitions keep
Alive ever in the heart
So that the handful of your dust
Does not to grave depart.

Desire is the very soul
Of the world of colours and scents
It is for sure a trustee of
The nature of all God-sents.

Desire makes the heart to dance
In bosom, one and all
And bosoms, with its glow reflect
Like mirrors (small and tall).

And power of soaring it bestows
Upon the handful dust
And [1] Khizr it makes of Moses who
On sight alone did trust

The heart, by burning desire,
Inspire life with zeal
And this zeal when it seizes life
All untruths' fate does seal

When from the creation of desire
It indifferently refrains
Its pinion snaps and breaks (in bits)
It falls from flight (in pains)

Desire puts perpetual pep,
And zeal and zest in the Self
The crest of wave is restless
In the ocean of the Self

Desire is the running noose
For hunting ideals, aim
The binder of the register
Of deeds (of fame, infame)

Negation of desire takes
The life away from the living
Much like the lessening of the heat
Puts off a flame's being

What really is the source of
These wakeful eyes of ours?
It is delight of seeing ourselves
In visible shape (for hours)

The partridge owes its feet to
The gaiety of its gait
The nightingale its beak to
Its singing zeal innate.

The reed-pipe settled itself
Outside the beds of reed
So music got released itself
From its prison, indeed [2]

What is the essence of our mind
Inventive and sky-searching?
Nothing is known to you about
The miracle of its being

Life owes its richness, capital
To nothing but desire
And mind is but a baby born
From its womb, sole, entire

What are a nation's orders,
Laws, customs, constitution?
What secrets of the novelties
Of scientific contribution?

It is desire which blossomed
By virtue of its strength
It bursts forth from the heart
And took shape (breadth and length)

These hands and teeth, and (these) brains
(These) eyes and (these) ears
This thought, fancy and consciousness
Good memory, sense (sans peers)

When life rode its mount into
The battlefield's foray
For self-preservation it did
Invent these weapons' array.

Knowledge is not the objective
Of science and of art
Like buds and flowers don't display
A garden's every part

Science is but an instrument
For preservation of life
It is the where-withal for the Self
To keep its vigour and strife

For science and art are nothing else
Than fore-warners of life
The twain are nothing other than
Slaves born in the house of life

O you who are a stranger to
Mystery of life! Arise!
Intoxicated with the wine
Of ideal (life), arise!

An ideal radiant like unto
The brilliant bursting dawn
For other-than God like fire
Aflame to burn (anon)

An aim, an ideal higher
Than heavens on the high
That wins, enchants and captivates
All men (- he, you and I).

Ravager of the falsehood
Of ancient times and old
Embodiment of the Judgement Day
Whose pockets turmoil hold

We are alive because of
Creating ideals new
We are aglow and radiate
Desire's rays to view

[1]Quran Chapter XIII verses 64–66 Khizr is the seer Prophet whose apparent actions puzzled Moses who had promised not to question them but did not have the patience for long Khizr explained his actions to Moses from whom he then parted company

[2]When the reed was shaped into a flute, music was released from its prison

III

EXPOSITION OF THE THEORY THAT THE SELF IS STRENGTHENED BY INTENSE LOVE

The focal point of luminous light
Known by the name of the Self
Beneath our dust, in fact, is
The spark of life itself

By Love it certainly becomes
More lasting and more living
More burning with desire
More scintillating, glowing

Love adds fuel to fire of
The essence of the Self
It opens up hidden avenues
Of progress for the Self

The nature of the Self obtains
Its fire's store from love
It learns illumination of
The world from the light of love

Love is free from the fear of
The dagger and the sword
For it isn't born of water,
Or air or earthly (hoard)

Love is at the very root
Of peace, of war in here
Its furbished sword does also mean
Fountain of life (so clear)

One glance of love splits to bits
The hardest of the stones
And love of God, finally
God Himself, Himself owns!

So learn to love and intensely
Beloved yours seek!
The eye of Noah, Job's heart
(Out of your loving eke.)

Handful of dust through alchemy
Transmute into pure gold
For this achievement kiss threshold
Of Man of Perfect Mould.

And Rumi-like enkindle
The candle of your Self
And Rum[1] reduce to ashes
With Tabriz-fire itself

Right, in your heart, hidden,
Beloved yours lies
Come, I shall show his glimpse to you
If you have seeing eyes

His lovers are more beautiful
Than the fairest of beloveds
More pleasing and more comely
Most lovable of beloveds.

The heart is rendered stronger
And stronger by his love
It makes this earth rub shoulders
With Pleiades above

The soil of Nejd[2] adorned itself
By presence of his grace
With which it was enraptured
With skies stood face to face.

And every Muslim's heart is
The home of Mustafa[3]
Our glory is the reflection of
The name of Mustafa

Sinai is but an eddy of
The dust of the house of his
For Ka'ba itself a Sanctuary
His dwelling place is!

Eternity is far far less than
A moment of *his* time-sense
Pro-longation it earns from
The purity of *his* essence.

A mat of rushes was obliged
To him for use as bed
Although on crown of Chosroe
His followers' feet did tread

In night-abode of Mount Hera
He stayed in solitude
Welded an Ummah, gave it law,
Good government ('s beatitude).

Night after night his eyes remained
Deprived of wink of sleep
So that on the throne of Chosroes
His Ummah may rest, sleep.

In the thick of battle his sword
Melted the iron strong
While during prayers in his eyes
Tears welled up in throng.

During his prayers for help Divine
His sword would 'Amen' say
Exterminated race of Kings
(Terminated their sway).

He laid in the world foundation of
Laws, constitution new
Empires of antiquity
He did conquer, sub-due

By dint of key of religion
The world's door opened he
The like of him the womb of Time
Didn't give birth definitely

All equal were in sight of his
The high and the low
With his own slave he partook
Of meals, (ne'er raising brow)

In a battle was brought before him
- High heavens were whose throne
The daughter of Tai's chieftain
As prisoner (-- lone, for-lorn)

Her feet were chained in shackles
Her face without a veil
Her (graceful) neck was bowed down
(With) modesty, in shame (pale)

When the Prophet saw the girl like this
Without a veil on face
He drew before her face at once
His mantle (with full grace)

More bare are we than that lady
Of Tai's tribe of old
Before the nations of the world
We have no sheet's fold

On the Judgement Day will he alone
Sole trustee ours be
And in this world, here also,
Provides us cover he

Be it his favour or his wrath
Are mercy his entire
That for his friends and followers
And this for foes need dire

He opened for his enemies
The door of mercy wide
And gave to Mecca message of
[4] "No penatly Free abide"

We who from bonds of homeland
Are, have been, ever free
Like sight - though light of eyes two
Is one, shall ever be!

We are from China, from Hijaz
We are from Persia, yet
Our smiling dawn in all these lands
From same dew we beget

With the cup-bearer of [5] But-ha's eyes
Spell – bound are ever we
In this world, like the wine and flask
United ever are we.

Distinctions of all pedigree
He burnt to purify
This stubble and rubble's ashes
His fire made these fly

A hundred-petalled rose are we
Yet we have perfume one
Our Order's very soul is he
He only and else none.

We were a guarded secret
That in his heart did lie
Fearlessly he exhorted us
Revealing us thereby

The throbbing music of his love
Lay silent in my reed
A hundred restless melodies are
From bosom keen to speed

Devotion to him, shall I say,
[6] Miracles it can perform
An absolutely dry-wood cried
At parting (from his form)

The beings of Muslims reflect
His celestial light
Many a Sinai springs up from
His path's dust ('s delight)

My image was created by
His mirror inherent bright
My morning is mere glow from
His bosom's sun ('s light).

In feverish burning momently
I rest and I repose
Than morning of the Judgement Day
My evening's more hot, close

He is the cloud of Spring and I
The garden (thirsting rain)
My vine derives its moisture from
Its rain (in my terrain)

My eye it is that I have sown
In Love's field
Harvested have I in the end
(My vision - a plenty yield)

Than both the worlds is dearer far
Medina's soil to me
O happy cooling city where
My Sweet-heart's dwelling be!

Admire I with heart and soul
The style of great [7] Jami
His prose, his verse are remedy for
My immaturity.

His poetry ever over-flows
With meanings beautiful
In praise of our Master, he
Pearls threaded many a full

"To the Manuscript of this Universe
He is the very preface
He is the Master, all the worlds
Are slaves of the Master's grace."

Spring many a spiritual mood from
Inspiring wine of love
Blind following and devotion are
Of attributes of love.

The perfect saint of [8] Bistam was
Unique so in devotion
A water-melon he abstained
From eating (due to caution)

If you are a lover, gain strength
From following your sweet-heart
So that you capture God Himself
Within your noose (smart)

Sojourn for a little while
In the [9] Hera of your heart
Abandon yourself so that you
Towards the Truth depart

Firmed up thus by the Truth then
Take steps towards yourself
Sensuality's [10] Lat and Uzza's heads
Hit, break, to save your Self

A laskhar then you raise from
The might and main of love
In full glory reveal yourself
On [11] Faran's top alcove

So that the Lord of Ka'ba
Showers His favours on you
"I am appointing a Vicegerent"[12]
He moulds you-model true

[1]Shams of Tabriz was the Mentor of Rumi who was a scholastic to begin with but whose books were burnt by his Mentor through sheer spiritual fire

[2]Part of Arabia

[3]Mustafa is one of the 99 names of Mohammad (Peace be upon him)

[4]At the time of conquest of Mecca, the Prophet gave amnesty to all by reciting this verse from the Quran mere reference to which has been given here

[5]The valley of Mecca

[6]The Prophet used to lean against the dry trunk of a palm-tree When he shifted to a nearby pulpit, the dry wood uttered cries

[7]Mulla Jami - Maulana Noorduddin Abdur Rehman (1414 1492 A D) The last of the poets of the golden era of Persia His poems in love of the Prophet are very movingly devotional He is the author of the mathanavi 'Yusuf Zulekha" also

[8]Saint Ba Yazid of Bistam did not eat a water-melon all his life as he did not know the way the Prophet ate it

[9]The cave in a mountain near Mecca where the Prophet used to mediate and pray and where he received the first revelation

[10]The idols which were worshipped in Arabia before Islam

[11]A mountain in the vicinity of Mecca

[12]The Quranic verse regarding the creation of man as his Vicegerent on earth

IV

EXPLAINING THAT THE SELF IS RENDERED WEAK THROUGH ASKING/BEGGING

O you who wrested tribute from
Tigers and lions fierce[1]
In disposition fox-like turned you
Neediness ('s pierce)

Your utter broken-ness is due
To utmost indigence
All pains and all your penuries
From malady this commence

It robs of dignity, loftiness
Of high thoughts your own mind
The taper of fancy's nobleness
Whiffs off (to make you blind)

From the jar of being, existence
Pour rose-red wine for self
Snatch from the pocket of Time
Your share of cash and pelf.

Like [1] Omar from the camel dismount
To pick up your own whip
Beware! Beware! Accepting
Even obligation ('s tip)

How long will you be begging
For favour of office of state
Like children making of a reed
A horse (as a playmate)

A temperament which fixes gaze
On heights of heavens high
Falls flat, debased, dishonoured
Accepting favours (sly.)

Out-stretching hand makes poverty
More abject, more debased
The beggar due to begging
Grows poorer, self-defaced

The stretching palm disintegrates
Components of the Self
And renders palm-tree of Sinai
Un-illumed of the Self

Your dust, even a handful
From self, cast not away
Scrape own provisions from your side
As is the moon's way.

Even though in penury,
In clutches of wretchery be
Even though all possessions yours
Wash off the stormy sea

Seek not your sustenance from
Bounty of this, that, other
Seek not even a ripple from
The sun ('s gushing river)

So that, you may not feel ashamed
In the Holy Prophet's presence
On the morrow of the Day when souls
Shall melt-with dread of sentence.

To the moon its food is doled from
The table laid by the sun
So brand of the sun's favour on
Its heart it cannot shun.

So seeking courage from the Lord
Join battle with Fortune
Don't soil and sully the honour of
The radiant Ummah ('s boon)

From the premises of the Ka'ba
Who rubbish of idols cleared?
Called, earner with the sweat of brow
"God's friend" - to Him endeared?

Woe be on the acceptor of
The crumbs from other's table
Under the weight of favours mean
Who cannot keep head stable.

Himself he's burnt to ashes with
Other's favour's lightning
He threw away his honour
For a mean and paltry farthing.

How happy is the thirsty man
Right in the middle of the sun
For even a cup of water
To Khizr who does not run

His brow does'nt carry the sweat of
A beggar's infame, shame
Retains thus he the shape of man
Is not mere clay, in name.

Beneath revolving heavens
That noble young man walks
Holding his head ever higher
Like pine ('s stately stalk).

Who during empty-handedness
Shows more of self-respect
His luck may be in slumber
He's awake (and circumspect)

An ocean gathered by begging
Is but a flow of fire
More agreeable is a dew-drop
(Garnered by self entire)

Live manly like a bubble[2]
In honour, self-respect
Right in the middle of the sea
Invert your cup erect

[1]The Caliph Omar dismounted from his camel to pick up scourge and did not accept even this very small obligation

[2]A bubble is bowl-like in shape. Whereas a bowl is meant f- receiving a bubble in not and hence is self-dependent

V

WHEN THE SELF IS RENDERED STRONG THROUGH LOVE AND AFFECTION IT CONQUERS THE PATENT AND LATENT FORCES OF THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE

By dint of intense loving
When the Self is rendered strong
Its power becomes the ruling force
Of the world's short and long.

The Sage of Heaven with the stars
Created this design
Plucked buds from the twigs of
The Self ('s plant benign).

The Lord Himself's hand –
Its hand-hold gets to be
[1] Its finger splits the moon in twain
(With movement easy, free)

Becomes it the arbiterator
Of squabbles, quarrels of the world
[2] King Darius and King Jamshid
Obey his final word

Of [3] Bu Ali I'll tell you
A story sound and true
In India he is well-known
In nooks and crannies too

That minstrel who sang unto us
Of rose-gardens of old
About a sprightly lovely rose
A fable us he told.

In a region of this territory
Which is of fire born
With the air of his fluttering skirt
In paradise rises morn.

A youngish disciple of his
Went one day to bazaar
Drunken with the discourses
From this Bu Ali's bar

Of that city, the governor
Came riding on horse-back
Accompanied by his servants,
Staff-bearers, fore and back

The fore-runner warned loudly
"O senseless, foolish one!
Out of the governor's escort's way"!
(For they shall tolerate none)

However with a drooping head
That Durvish went along
Drowned in the sea of his own thoughts
(Unmindful of the throng)

The staff bearer, drunk as he was
With cup of (pomp and) pride
On the head of the Durvish broke his staff
(With a loud-sounding chide)

The Durvish stepped in sorrow aside
From the governor's way
With a heart heavy and unhappy
And sad. (in deep dismay).

He told this tale of woe to
The pious Bu Ali
Releasing tears from the prison
Of eyes, flowing free.

Like lightning bursting suddenly
On mountain's (vales and peak)
The Sheikh opened the flood-gates
Of fiery words to speak.

From his very chord of soul
Strange fire he released
His secretary he called in
To bid do as him pleased

Take out your pen and write
At once the following matter.
"From a mere Durvish
To the Sultan, a letter --

Your Governor has struck with a staff
My follower on his head
And thus has placed on his own life
A live coal that burns dead

Withdraw and put in chains you must
This wicked-natured governor
Lest I bestow your Kingdom, crown
Upon some one other"

Epistle this of the saint revered
Who had access to God
Filled every limb of the Sultan
With trembling, he stood awed

His body was afflicted with
All malady and all pain
Like unto the departing sun
Pale he became and wane

At once he (issued orders)
To handcuff the governor
Entreating Saint Bu 'Ali
Apology did he tender

[4] Khusrau, the poet eloquent
Sweet-tongued, of colourful diction
Whose melodies emanate from
The conscience of creation

Whose nature was as luminous
As brilliance of the moon
Was chosen as ambassador
By the King to mediate soon

As he played softly sweetly
Before the saint his lute
The melting music, the glassy soul
Of Bu 'Ali, rendered mute

The grandeur of the Kingdom
That was like a mighty mount
Was regained with the price of
One spurt from Poesy's fount

Do not you wound the heart of
Durvishes with a knife
Do not you cast in fire ablaze
Yourself, your very life

[1]Refers to the miracle performed by the Prophet

[2]Two famous Persian emperors

[3]Sheikh Sharafuddin better known as Bu Ali Qalandar (–1325 A D) was a revered saint who lies buried in Panipat, India He was a well-known mystic poet of Persian His piety and straightforwardness stuck awe among the contemporary emperors and their courtiers

[4]Amir Khusrau (1250 - 1325 A D) in whom blossomed all the best qualities of mediaeval Sultanates of Delhi was at the same time the greatest Persian poet that India produced, an unmatched prose-writer, a musician who invented most of the musical instruments played in the sub-continent, a composer of new ragas and melodies, a fighter, who was taken captive by the Mongols, a diplomat, the most devoted disciple of the great saint Nizam-ud-Din Aulia of Delhi, the originator of many genres of compositions in Urdu-Hindi etc He lived through the reigns of as many as five emperors with most of whom he had close association He was revered by saints, emperors and the common folks alike. His 1000th anniversary was celebrated in 1975 in Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, Iran, Russia and some other countries

VI

A TALE CARRYING THE MORAL THAT THE THEORY OF NEGATION OF THE SELF IS ONE OF THE INVENTIONS OF THE SUBJECT NATIONS OF MANKIND SO THAT THROUGH THIS METHOD THEY MAY WEAKEN THE CHARACTER OF THE RULING NATIONS

Have you heard the fable that
In times ancient, old
In a green and grassy pasture
Lived sheep (grew manifold)

As they had abundant fodder
They multiplied and grew
Entirely free from fear of
An enemy, (old or new)

But Ah! At last ill-fortune struck
Their happy life content
And by calamity's arrows
Their breasts were all rent

Some tigers from the jungle
Appeared on the scene
And carried out a night-raid
On the sheep's pasture green

To grasp, absorb and conquer
Are might's characteristics
And victory's secret manifests
Itself in strength ('s statistics)

The fierce big male tigers
Beat their sovereignty's drum
The sheep they did deprive of
Their liberty, their freedom

As tigers must and need must have
Their victims and their prey
The pasture with the blood of sheep
Turned into a crimson bay

One of the sheep, who had a head
Wise, cunning, and astute
Who, worn by years, was as shrewd
As wolf, weather-worn acute.

Sorely aggrieved at the fate of
His progeny and his fellows
With tigers' depredations
His heart bled, (in the meadows).

Himself consuming, he bemoaned
Of fate's vicissitude
By crafty cunning planning sought
His affairs' rectitude.

For self-preservation
A man, who is weak
From worldy-wise intelligence
Devices learns to seek

In bondage and in slavery
For repelling harm
The faculty of scheming
Gives him a shot in the arm

As madness for revenge does
Grow rabid more and more
Intelligence in bondage plans
To even up the score

Soliloquising, he uttered:
"Our knot is very hard
The ocean of our sorrows has
No shore, (O our Lord!).

By force of arm we cannot
Escape from tigers' hold
We've arms (and legs) of silver
And they of steel – so cold

It is *not* ever possible
Through sermons perfect, wise
To turn a sheep's nature
To be in wolf's guise.

It is, however, possible to
Turn a tiger into a sheep
By making him unmindful of
His nature's cruel sweep"

He started acting as one
Inspired by revelation
To the blood-thirsty tigers
He began delivering a sermon

Cried he: "O liars insolent!
Unmindful of the day
Of ill-luck that awaits you
For ever which shall stay"[1]

Repository sure I am
Of all spiritual powers
Apostle sent by God for
Reforming all the tigers

I've come as comes the light
To eyes which are dark
My mission is establishing laws
To my commandments, hark!

Repentence is your course, therefore,
For your blame-worthy deed
O plotters of own ruin!
Your benefit's counsel, heed!

The violent, the ferocious are
Hard-hearted, of luck bad
So through denial of the Self
To life real firmness add

The soul and spirit of the righteous
Gets sustenance from the fodder
The vegetarian pleases God
Obeying thus His order

The sharpness of your teeth brings
For you only disgrace
And renders your perceiving eyes
Dead blind to all His grace.

The paradise is reserved for
The weak, (the meek) alone
And might and strength are causes of
Loss, (sin-one can't atone)

The search for glory, grandeur
Is wickedness itself
Penury is far sweeter than
Richness and pomp and pelf

The burning lightning does not lie
In ambush for one grain
If grain becomes a stack itself
It is'nt wise (but vain)

A sand-grain be, if you have sense
Rather than a [2] Sahra wide
So that with the sun's radiance
In light you ever abide

O you who revel in killing
The poor harmless sheep
Slay rather yourself, thereby
In honour yourself keep

For life is made evanascent
Unsettled and unstable
Through cruelty, through oppression
Through vengeance, power's label.

Though trodden by the feet it is
Grass does grow time an' again
It washes away the dream of death
Its eyes it so does train

Forget your Self (completely)
If you are (truly) wise .
If you do not forget your Self
You shall in madness rise.

[3]Close eyes yours, your ears close
Your lips you also seal
So that your thoughts reach lofty heights
Of heaven ('s revolving wheel)

This meadow of the world was naught
And naught shall ever be
O fools! Do not torment yourself
Pursuing phantoms free".

Exhausted as the tigers' clan
Was due to constant toils
And given as its heart was
To hedonistic foils

They liked and they welcomed this
Advice which was a dope
Stupidly they were duped by
This sheep's magic-hope.

They who were wont to prey upon
And have sheep as repast
Accepted the faith of the sheep
Contrasting their own past

The diet alone of fodder
Became their favourite food
Their pearl-like nature was reduced
To earthen-pieces crude

When the constant food of fodder had
Blunted teeth of theirs
The awe of their flashing eyes,
Was left without its glares

Then stage by stage from their heart
Their courage ebbed away
Like shean and shine of mirror
Deserts, to its dismay

That zeal, that fire, that frenzy,
For utter most exertion,
That inner urge left their hearts
Which egged them on to action.

Gone, gone was their suzeranity
Resolve, determination
Their confidence and their honour
Prestigious elevation

Their paws which were once iron-cast
Lost all their (sharpness,) strength
Their souls were rendered life-less
Their bodies, graves, (at length)

Their bodies' strength diminished
Their fear for death increased
With this increase in fear of death
Their courage's stock decreased

A hundred maladies were born of
This lack of courage sore –
Like utter empty-handedness
Zestlessness, meanness's core

The wakeful alert tigers
By sheep were lulled to sleep
Their own decline they styled as
The (moral) culture ('s leap)

[1] These words have been borrowed from and carry the ring of the Quran

[2] Desert

[3] This is a quotation from the mathnavi of Maulana Rum

VII

EXPOSITION THAT [1] PLATO, THE GREEK WHOSE THOUGHT GREATLY INFLUENCED THE MYSTICISM AND LITERATURE OF THE MUSLIM NATIONS FOLLOWED THE SHEEP's DOCTRINE AND THAT WE MUST BEWARE OF AND ESCHEW HIS THOUGHT (AND THEORIES)

Plato, the old philosopher –
Ascetic of olden times –
Belonged, in real, to the flock
Of sheep of ancient climes

[2] Pegasus his had gone astray
In philosophy's gloom
And dropped its shoe in the mountain range
Of being ('s limitless-room)

The invisible fascinated him
To such a great degree
That trust of hand and eye and ear
He did not have bit wee

Said he "The life's secret
In death, is hid alone
The taper's glories hundred
By its whiff off are shown"

On our fancy, our thought
He did, does dominate
From world of senses weans us
His cup is an opiate.

A sheep he, in reality, is
In man's clothing clad
The grip on Sufi's soul is firm
Of his philosophic fad.

Betook he to high heavens
His reason, intellect
To him this world of cause-effect
Was but a fable's text.

His sole pre-occupation was
Life's structure to dissolve
And cut the branches off from
Life's cypress's high (resolve)

For Plato's thought asserted
That loss was real gain
Said his Philosophy nothingness,
Was real, Being, in vain.

Himself of drowsy nature
Created he a dream
His mind's eye created
Mirage ('s running stream)

Deprived, as he himself was
Of action's flair and taste
His soul was all enraptured by
Non-being (what a taste!)

Turned he a disbeliever of
Material universe
Became he the creator of
Invisible ideas terse.

A living soul feels happy with
The possibilities' world
A dead soul always revels in
Mere abstruse ideas' world.

So his gazelle has never known
The pleasure of movement's grace
Unlawful is to his partridge
The thrill of breezy-pace.

His dew drops are by birth deprived
Of power of silent flight
His birds are born with chests which are
Without a breath ('s delight).

His seed does'nt have in the least
Desire for any growth
His moth's entirely ignorant
Of immolations oath.

Our hermit had no option but
To seek escape from life
He did not have endurance for
The voice of this world's fife.

His heart he wholly set on
The glow of petering flame
Depicted and described the world
Of lotus-eating fame.

Weighing his wings from his nest
Towards the heaven high
He never came to rest again
Inside his nest or nigh.

In the flask of heaven has been lost
His fantacy and his thought
I do not know, it means the dregs
Or the flask's pieces aught.

Full many a nation poisoned by
Intoxication his
Sank into deep sound slumber,
Lost thrill of action's bliss.

[1]Plato (430–347 B C.). One the famous Greek philosophers, a pupil of Socrates and teacher of Aristotle. Taught in one of the academies of Athens Author of a number of books, most reputed of which is Democracy He held that reality does not lie in the apparent and the evanascent but in meditation regarding the existence of the first cause and that the aim of thought is goodness and virtue.

Nicholson credits him with having "Profoundly influenced the intellectual and spiritual development of Islam" and says that he "may be called, if not the father of Mohammadan mysticism, at any rate its presiding genius"

That he "profoundly influenced the intellectual" development of Islam may be partly true but the other conclusions drawn by Nicholson are highly disputable The source of Sufism as well as its "presiding genius" was none else than the Prophet himself as is proved to the hilt by the chains of all the sufi orders of the Muslims.

[2]Pegasus: mythical winged horse that caused Hippoerene fountain to flow, with his hoofs Figuratively used for poetic genius

VIII

THE TRUE NATURE OF POETRY AND REFORM OF ISLAMIC LITERATURE

Man is warm-blooded due to
Desire's branding stamp
This dust is lit like fire by
Desire's burning lamp.

It is desire which fills the cup
Of life, up to the brim
So that it grows up warmly
Walks briskly and in trim.

Nothing is life if it is not
The essence of conquest
Desire is the talisman
Always in conquest's quest.

Life preys, and, it hunts with
The snare of desire
From love to beauty it is it
Which means the errand entire.

From which channel does momently
Desire rise and flow?
For life's music it provides
High keys and notes low.

All that is good and shapely,
In forms beautiful
Is our guide in searches
In wastes and wilds full.

It is embossed indelibly
On your heart so
That in it, it ever creates
Desires' (ebb and flow).

Beauty is the creator of
The spring-time of desire
Its display and exposure
Nourishes desire ('s fire).

The bosom of a poet is
A hall lit bright with beauty
From its Sinai beams forth
Brilliance of radiant beauty.

It is his eye which renders
The fair into more fair
Through his enchantment nature grows
A sweet heart, lovelier.

It is from his and his breath that
Learnt songs the nightingale
It is his natural pink which
The rose-cheek got in sale.

It is his passions only which
The moths' heart inspire
He lends colour to tales of
Love (in the world entire).

The sea, the land are hidden in
His water and his clay
A hundred undiscovered worlds
Lie in his heart and lay.

Full many a tulip un-bloomed
Full many an unheard song
Full many a lament lain have
In mind of his for long.

His fancy dwells in company of
The moon and the stars
Creates he beauty all around
He knows no ugly scars.

He is the [1] Khizr, in his gloom
Flows full the Fount of Life
The Universe is livelier with
His eyes' sparkle rife.

We tread and trudge so heavily
Are crude, raw, simpleton
We trip, we fall, we stumble
On road of destination.

It is his nightingale which has
Played a (touching) tune
And in this manner it has
Furnished us with a boon.

So that perforce he draw us
To life's paradise
That (rain-) bow of our life is
Complete, circle-wise.

March on the caravans with
The tolling of his bell
March on they lured by tunes which
Up from his pipe well.

As his zephyr blows in
Our garden's corners, nooks
The tulip and rose equally
Its stealthy softness brooks.

His winning guile makes life
Always to be self-growing
It learns to analyse itself
Be impatient, self-knowing.

Invites he the entire world
To table spread and laid
His fire lavishly he shares
Like air-free, unpaid.

Woe be to a people who resigns
Itself to fate of dearth
Whose poet turns his head from
Life's fervour, flavour, mirth.

Whose mirror reflects ugliness
Beauty as if it were
His honey leaves a hundred stings
(Which pains in hearts stir).

His lightest kiss does whisk away
Freshness from (freshest) rose
He clips off nightingale's wings
Robs it of soaring pose.

Your nerves are lack-a-daisical
From his own opium's dose
You pay with your very life
For his content's repose.

He strangulates, he (surely) kills
Cypress's urge for height
His freezing breath puts a falcon male
Into a pheasant's plight.

He is a fish but chest to head
His body is like men's
In the wide expanse of ocean
Misleading like [2] Sirens.

With his song he enraptures
The pilot in mid-deep
His ship he swirls and whirls into
Bottom of ocean's sweep.

His songs and his melodies
Steal firmness from your heart
His magic lures you to believe
That death is life ('s sort).

He snatches away from your soul
Desire to exist
The scarlet ruby he extracts
From your mine ('s fist).

Like gain he dresses tightly
In guise and garb of loss
Each thing which is praiseworthy
He nails to blame's cross.

He throws you into the ocean of
The apprehensive thought
He renders you a stranger
To life with action fraught.

The sick amongst us by his words
Are made sick, more and more
The gathering, whole, is sicker far
With his cup's moving score.

In his month of April
There are no lightning streaks
His garden is but mere mirage
Of scents and hues (and peaks.)

His beauty has no truck with
Truthfulness and with truth
His sea has nothing else than
Pearls full of flaw. forsooth.

He reckons sleep far sweeter than
Alertness, wakefulness
Our fire has been sniffed out
By his breath ('s frozenness.)

His nightingale's melody
Has poisoned hearts all round
Beneath the pile of his roses
Deadly adders abound.

Beware of cask and of his flask
Beware of goblet his
Beware, O please! Beware of
Wine chrystal-clear his.

O you, who has been taken off
Your feet, by liquor, wine
Whose morning gets its light from
The East of his flask's shine.

O you, whose heart is dead cold
With his melodies chill
Gulped have you deadly poison
To your ears' fill

O you, whose style of life is
Your degeneracy's proof
The strings of your instrument
From tune have come aloof.

To such extent down-trodden
Through laziness you've become
That in this world the disgrace
For Muslims you've become.

With the weakest vein of a rose
You can be tied and bound
With the slightest waft of zephyr
You get a stab and wound.

Infamy rank on love you've heaped
With lamentation yours
His fair picture has besmeared
The brush of [3] Behzad yours.

His rosy cheek has pale become
With your malady
Your chill has quenched the glow of
His fire's (melody)

It is your broken-heartedness
Which has made him heart-sick
It is your weakness, feebleness
Which turned him lean as stick

It's tears of childishness which 've been
Poured into his cup
His household has been furnished with
Distressing sights' show-up

Intoxicated does he get
Through bĕgging in tavern
Steals he the beauty's glimpses
From lodge's lattices stern.

Not merely is unhappy he.
He's sorrowful and sad
And he is virtually dead with
The warder's beating bad.

With sorrow emaciated, thin
Like thinnest of the reeds
His lips are brimful with complaints
Of heavens' unkind deeds.

Of flattery, and of spitefulness
His mirror's essence made
And utter weakness (spinelessness)
Has been his old comrade.

Of lowly luck, an under-dog
And base by birth is he
So undeserving, so hopeless
Whose object, aim, none be.

Whose constant lamentations have
Hollowed your life entire
From eyes of his neighbours have
Robbed sleep's repose, desire.

Alas! for love whose fire
Stands petered out, dead cold
Born in the [4] Haram's precincts, died
In idol-house (, behold!)

O you! In whose own pocket
Love's poesy carry you
Rub it once on the touchstone
Of life yourself too.

Thought's clarity has always been
The guide of actions, deeds
Like flash of lightning always
The thunder's peel precedes.

Thought's purity is your first concern
For literature and lore
Then turn back to Arabia
For pure thought, O once more!

To the [5] Salma of Arabia
The heart in love must yield
[6] Hijaz's morn blossoms thus
In Kurd's evening's (field).

From gardens non-Arabian
Roses gathered have you
Spring time of India and Iran
You have revelled in too.

A wee bit heat of desert
You must now also taste
And also sip the wine old
Brewed (tenderly) from the date.

For once, place your head on
Its warm and kindly breast
Your self expose for a moment
To its [7] semoom's crest

For long you have enwrapped yourself
In softnesses of silk
It's time your self accustom now
To cotton of coarse ilk.

For centuries you have treaded
Care free, on tulip tender
Like rose you washed your cheek with
The dew-drops (silky, slender.)

Yourself on sand scorching
It's time you also throw
And headlong then dive into
Zamzam's perennial flow.

For how long nightingale-like
Will you bemoan, bewail
For how long will you dwell in
Nests built in garden, dale

O you! whose nest auspicious would
The Phoenix honour do
Build for yourself a nest on
High mountain, (with ado).

A nest that is embosomed
In lightning and in thunder
A nest that's in its loftiness
Than eagle's eyrie yonder.

So that you may be well-equipped
For battle of this life
So that your body and your soul
Burn with the fire of life.

[1]Khizr is a Prophet who is credited with having discovered the Fountain of Life in the Domain of Darkness, drank from it and is alive His mission is to guide the way farers who lose their way on land. He can appear and disappear at will

Although not mentioned by name in the Quran, the commentators are agreed that Moses sought his guidance and company but could not remain patient with some of his actions which were performed by Khizr under order from God but which were ununderstandable to him

[2]Sirens are mythical half-women half birds who lure unwary seafarers with enchanting music.

[3]Behzad was one of the two most famous painters of Persia.

[4]*Haram the holy precincts of the Ka'ba, the most sacred premises* for the Muslims.

[5]Classical beloved of Arabic literature.

[6]Sheikh Hisamul Haq Ziauddin, a saint's utterance "In the evening I was a Kurd but in the morning I woke up as an Arab".

[7]The extremely hot and choking wind that blows in deserts.

IX

THE TRAINING OF THE SELF HAS THREE STAGES NAMELY: OBEDIENCE, SELF-CONTROL AND VICEGERENCY OF GOD

The First Stage:
Obedience

Service and toil incessant are
A camel's natural trait
Patience and perseverence are
His job, his work, his fate.

Noiselessly fall his steps on
The (hot and sandy) track
Through deserts it takes caravans
Like the ship, on its back.

The fate of every forest is
His footprints to bear
Although he little eats and sleeps
Toils he without wear.

He trots along so merrily
Under the litter's weight
With measured steps he goes along
To destination ('s gate).

Inebriated he is with
The mood of his own speed
In travel, than his rider
More patient he's indeed.

You should not, likewise, shirk from
The burden of your duties
So that you make self worthy of
Lord's best-of-dwellings' bounties.

So toil and moil in obedience
O you, of heedless trait!
For (rank) compulsion gives birth to
Freedom of action straight.

Non-entity becomes an entity
Through obedience alone
Through disobedience fire even
Is turned to ash (unknown).

Who so subdues and conquers
The moon and the stars
Puts himself in the chains of
The laws, behind their bars.

It is the sweet-smelling rose
Which puts in prison the air
The navel of the musk-deer
Confines the perfume rare.

The star steadily moves its steps
Towards its destination
Head bowed in deep obedience
Before a constitution.

The grass grows up (so lush and green)
Under the law of growth
On deviation from this law
It is down-trodden (, loath).

The tulip is attuned to law
Of burning ceaselessly
So that its blood keeps coursing
Through veins so expressly.

Under the law of union
Rain drops into oceans turn
Sand grains observing union's law
Into a Sahara turn!

The core of everything is strong
Due to order and law
Why do you pass by this source
Heedless, in wisdom raw.

O you who are untrammelled of
(Islam's) laws of old!
Adorn your foot again with
Its chain-of-silver's hold.

Complain not of the harshness
Of the law, of the Faith
The limits set by Mustafa
Do not transgress (and scathe).

The Second Stage:
Self-Control

In selfish aggrandisement
A camel you resemble
In self-willedness, self-worshipping
On self to ride and amble.

Be manly, and, hold in your hands
Its bridle to control
If pottery's broken piece you are
Become a pearl pure whole.

And every one who is'nt
Under his own command
'Is forced to follow orders
And meet the others' demand.

When the structure of your body was
Kneaded and raised from caly
With love did mix and mingle
Fear also they.

Fear of the world of matter
Fear of the next, of death
Fear of this earth's misfortunes
Of skies' (scalding breath).

The love of riches and of wealth
The love of one's own land
The love of nearest kith and kin
The love of wife ('s hand).

Ease-loving is this compound
Of water and of clay
Is victim of all wickedness
Fain dies in evils' way.

So long as you hold sceptre of
[1] "No-god-but-God" in hand
The spell of every fear you shall
Tear in shred and band.

Each one in whom dwells Allah
Like soul in body his
Shall never bow his head before
Falsehood and all it is.

Fear dare not penetrate into
His bosom (stout and strong)
Unawed remains his heart by
Other gods' (throng).

Who ever dwells in the domain
Of (simple pure) Negation
Finds, freedom from the bonds of
Wife's, progeny's relation.

Cuts off all the perspectives of
All others except of God
And places [2] knife on jugular vein
Of his own son, unawed.

Like the onslaught of a lashkar
Is he, all by himself
In his eyes this life is
Less cheap than air itself.

"No-god-but-Allah" is the shell,
Pearl: prayer in that cage
For a heart believing, prayer is
A mini – pilgrimage.

In the hand of a Muslim
'Tis like a dagger sharp
It kills the disobedient
The wicked, guilty, warp.

Fasting carries a night-raid
On hunger and on thirst
The [3] Khyber of sensuality's gates
Before it open burst.

Haj lits the innate qualities
In the nature of Believers
It teaches emigration,
Dismantles national barriers.

It is alone obedience which
Casts us in union's bond
It binds together, the leaves of
Our Holy Book (– our bond.)

Zakat to love of riches
Deals a deathly blow
Acquaints it with equality
The high and the low.

Firms up the heart with order of:
[4] "Until you spend what you love"
While it increases riches, wealth
It decreases their love

All these, are the wherewithals
Of reinforcing you
If in Islam your faith is
Solid and strong and true

Draw main and might from litany
Of: "O Almighty One!"
So that the title: 'rider of
Clay-camel', you have won.

[1]The Kalema i.e. "La ilaha ill-Allah" which negates the concept of anyone worthy of worship except God.

[2]This refers to Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his only son at God's command.

[3]The stronghold of Jews which was stormed by Ali and its gates were single-handedly unhinged and opened by him.

[4]Refers to the opening verse of Chapter IV of the Quran – "You shall not attain goodness until you spend of what you love"

The Third Stage:
Vicegerency of Allah

Controlling this camel (of clay)
Means rule over the world
Adorning head with the crown of
King Soloman: (Take my word!).

You will be its embellishment
As long the world exists
The crowned king of a country
Where unmixed peace subsists.

To be the vicegerent of God
On earth, how sweet it is!
To rule over the elements
How proper and meet it is!

The vicegerent of God is
Of the Universe, very soul
His being is the canopy of
[1] Magnificent Name's console.

He knows the secret, mystery
Of the part as well of the whole
And in the world establishes
Command of Allah sole.

In the length and breadth of the world
When he pitches the tent
This carpet spread by Time itself
He rolls up, (that moment)

His nature is brimful, replete
To Self-manifest, it pines
A universe altogether new
To bring forth, it inclines.

A hundred worlds kindred to
This world of part and whole,
Like rose, spring from the garden of
His (fertile) fancy ('s soul).

And every nature immature
He causes to mature
And from the Haram exit of
All idols does ensure.

The chord of heart bursts into tunes
From touch of plectrum his
For the sake of Truth and Truth alone
He wakes, he sleeps, that is.

To the old in years he teaches
The melodies of the youth
He lavishes on everything
Hues from the youth, (in truth)!

To mankind he brings tidings
As well as warnings grave
All rolled in one – a soldier,
General and commander brave.

The aim and object is he of:
[2]"He taught Adam all names"
The secret of: [3]"All praise to Him
Who took His servant" . . .'s aims.

His radiant [4] hand is stronger
Due to the staff he holds
His knowledge is matched only by
Nature's perfection's moulds.

As he, the bold cavalier –
Holds in his hands the reins
The steed of universal Time
Runs faster, more speed gains.

His aura and his awe are such
As dry up river [5] Nile
And out of Egypt lead away
The nation of Israel.

[6] "Rise!" Orders he and rises up
Dead body in the grave
And stand erect and stately
In vales like spruce-fir (brave).

[7] His person is the very cause
Of the world's entity
Salvation of all creation rests
In his grandeur and glory.

An atom vies with the sun
In his protection's shadow
To substance his alone does
Life precious values owe.

Through miracle of sheer action
Endows he zest to life
He modernises and revives
The ways and styles rife.

And pageants burst forth into view
From traces of his feet
A hundred Moses wander about
In his Sinai ('s beat).

To life's meanings gives he
An explanation new
This dream that is called life
He interprets anew.

The very secret of this life
Is his closetted being
The yet unheard-of melody
Of orchestra of being.

The Nature's poetic intellect
Turned blood-red, meditating
And only then could it compose
His person's verse equating.

This handful clay of ours
The very zenith reached
Out of its dust will sure appear
Cavalier, (long beseached.)

In slumber in the ashes of
To-day, of our present,
Lies our future's flame which will
Make this world luminiscent.

Our bud enfolds in itself
The garden's wide expanse
Our eyes are lit bright by
The dawn of morrow ('s romance).

Appear! O the rider of
The steed of whirling Time!
Appear! O the light of eye
Of possibilities' clime!

Be you the centrifugal point
Of clamour of things new
Come, come! And dwell in the black of
The eyes (waiting you).

Come, quieten, render silent
The din of nations all
Let paradise of your music
On our ears fall.

Arise and give the law that
Makes man the brother of man
The goblet of the wine of love
Pass round mankind again.

Bring back on earth the days of,
The nights of (unmixed) peace
To the warring nations message give
"Peace please! My friends, O please!"

Man-kind is the field of which
You are the harvest whole
For the caravan of life
You are the very goal.

The autumn's fury having shed
The leaves of all the trees
Pass through our gardens desolate
Like spring ('s enlivening breeze.)

The homage of prostrations
Of children, men: young, old
Our downcast brows pay you
O please! Deign to behold!

It's due alone to you that
We hold our heads so high
And from the pains of this world
We suffer and we sigh.

[1] The real, original name of Allah, as distinct from his attributive names.

[2] The Quranic verse regarding the purpose of creation of Adam when the angels opposed it.

[3] The Quranic verse praising the Lord for taking the Prophet at night first from Mecca to Jerusalem and from there to Heavens.

[4] Refers to the miracle granted to Moses by God.

[5] Reference to the drying up of the Nile with a stroke of Moses' staff.

[6] Reference to Christ's miracle of raising the dead.

[7] Reference to God's saying about the Prophet: "Had I not created you I would not have created men or jinns"

X

[CO]MMENTARY ON THE SECRETS OF THE NAME OF ALI MURTAZA[1]

The very first of Muslims
King of the brave – 'Ali
For deep devotion, intense love
The treasure of Faith – 'Ali.

Inspired is my life by
Deep love for family his
So in this world my being
Like a pearl shiny is.

Enraptured by my own sight
Narcissus-like I am
In avenues of his garden
Stray perfume-like I am.

If Zamzam gushes from mv earth
Its source is he alone
If wine oozes from my grapes
The force is he alone.

The mere dust that I am
His sun has mirror made
It's possible to see the song
Within my chest ('s shade).

From his mien the Prophet
Drew many an omen fair
The Nation of Truth gained glorv
From his splendour's glare.

His sayings tantamount to be
The strength of Islam true
The whole world gained its orderliness
From his House, too.

The Truth's Messenger[2] styled him as
The "Father of the dust"
While Allah Himself in His Book
[3] "God's own hand" called him first.

Each one who is conversant with
This life's deeper meanings
Knows 'Ali's names' secret
What it is, (and its healings).

This dusky dust, in other words,
This body which is called
Due to its inequities
Our reason stands begalled.

It makes our heaven-soaring thought
On lowly earth trudge, trot
Our eyes utterly blind and
Our ears hear not.

And due to lust a double-edged sword
It holds in its hand
Wayfarers' hearts are split by
This (blood-sucking) brigand.

The "Lion of Truth"[4] did sub-due
This body made of clay
This dark dust he then transformed
Into Elixir ('s way)

Murtaza,[5] whose sword has lent
To Truth the splendour bright
Is 'Bu Turab'[6] for conquering of
The body's kingdom ('s fight).

A man conquers countries
Through continuous attacks
His jewel's lustre is because
No self-respect he lacks.

Who-so-ever in the universe
Gains mastery over the dust
[7] Turns back the setting sun from
The West (- obey it must).

Whoever on the body's steed
Fastens the saddle, tight
Sets himself in sovereignty's seal
As a bezel bright.

Here, in this world, he tramples on
[8] Khyber's magnificence
Hereafter distributes he
The [9] Kausar's munificence.

Through self-awareness acts he
As the very hand of God
Through hand of God's action
Becomes he emperor awed.

His person is the gate of
[10] The city of knowledge all
Arabia, China and Greece
Are well under his thrall.

That you should wield authority
Over earthly self, is a must
So that you drink the sparkling wine
Brewed from your own vine first.

To burn itself to ash and dust
Is the creed of the moth
Be you the "Father of the dust"
This is the manly troth.

O soft of body, rose-like!
Become as hard as stone
So as to be the foundation
Of garden's four-wall own

From your very own clay
You should build up a man
And for this man then construct
A Universe – (you can!)

For if you do not build up
A wall or a door
Some other person will then mould
Bricks from your own clay's core.

O you who feel constricted by
Cruelty of heavens crooked!
You, whose goblet complains of
Injustice of stone wicked!

How long will you bemoan, complain
How long will you bewail
How long will you incessantly
Breast-beat, to no avail.

The quintessence of life is hid
In action, action alone
The law of life stands for
Joy in creation own.

Rise up and be creator of
A world, fresh and new
Acquire the fame of Abraham[11]
Whose body in flames they threw.

To yield to the dictates of
The world unfavourable
Means you accept defeat on
The field of (light) battle.

The self-respecting man who
Is well-versed in his work
To yield to his strong sweet will
The Times shall not shirk.

If the world of matter does'nt conform
To his temperament
He measures arms against the whole,
Entire firmament.

He would dig up foundations of
The universe entire
And mould from atoms order new
As his will would require.

The revolution of the times
He would subvert, upset
The azure firmament he would
Turned topsy-turvy get.

With his own prowess he will
Lay bare to open view
A new world which will gladly
Do what he bid it do.

If in the world is'nt possible
Life as behoves a man
To yield to death bravely
Means life's real span.

A man possessed of sound heart
Tries his prowess own
Of enterprises challenging
Takes up the gauntlet thrown.

How sweet it is to set love
To struggle against the odds
Like Abraham pluck flowers
From (grips of) flames' (pods).

The vistas of the prowess
Of men of action (brave)
Reveal and manifest themselves
In craving challenges grave.

The weapon of the cowardly
Is hatred, rancour alone
The guiding motive of their life
(To meanness is thus prone)

Naught else is life other than
The strength manifest
Its origin and its main spring
Lies in conquest's behest.

Forgiveness, mercy misplaced
Means chilled blood of life
Like a jarring break in the rhythm of
The well-poised verse of life

Whoever lies sunk in
The bottom of disgrace
Reads writ large: 'contentment'
In weakness (— his ace).

Weakness is nothing else than
For life a highway-man
Its inside is so pregnant with
Falsehoods' and fears' (clan)

Of virtues and of qualities
Its soul all empty is
For meanness and for vices
Its milk so nourishing is.

Beware, therefore, O man of
Sound judgement! O beware!!
In ambushes lies this enemy
To catch you unaware.

If you are a man of wisdom
Do not be duped by it
Chameleon-like each moment
It changes colour each bit.

Its shape and form is not discerned
By even those keen-sighted
As on its face are veils drawn
With it they are so blighted.

Some time behind pity while
At others gentleness
Hides it; and wears the stole of
Humaneness, meekliness.

Sometime it wears the veil of
Compulsion, helplessness
At others it lies hid beneath
Excuses (' murkiness.)

Unveils it then, its face full
In self-indulgent brand
And robs the heart of a strong man
Out of his very hand.

Truthfulness is the twin of
Power, prowess – indeed
This is the cup of Jamshid, if
You know your thought and deed.

Life is the cultivation
And its harvest power is
The commentary on the mystery of
Truth, falsehood, power is!

If re-inforced with power
A claimant comes to the fore
His claim is not in need of
Plea, argument, furore.

Falsehood derives from power
Authority of truth
Deems itself to be the truth itself
By falsifying truth.

Its biddance: "Be!" Turns poison
Into the nectar sweet
It dubs virtues as vices
As such they themselves treat.

O unaware of the manner of
The [12] Trust in you reposed!
Esteem your-self far better than
The worlds – hidden, exposed.

Equip yourself with knowledge
Of life's mysteries all
Be steadfast, and, fully ignore
Claimants of godhood ('s call.)

Open your eyes, ears and lips
O man! Intelligent!
If vou don't see the way of Truth.
Scoff at me; (don't relent!)

[1] Ali was the Prophet's first cousin, son of his uncle Abu Talib who had brought him up and afforded him protection against the opposition and persecution by the Quraish. Ali was only nine years old when proclaiming himself to to be a Muslim in response to the Prophet's call, he won the singular honour of being the first male convert to Islam. He was brought up and trained by the Prophet and moulded as a model Muslim He was married to the Prophet's daughter, Fatima.

Ali had many titles befitting the qualities he possessed like Murtaza Hyder, Bu Turab, Asadullah, Yadullah etc. He was extremely brave and to his credit go many a victory in the early battles of Islam. He was extremely learned and was a great mystic. He raised a model Muslim family Barring only one or two, all the mystic orders of Muslims trace their origin through him to the Prophet

He was the fourth of the Orthodox Caliphs. He was wounded mortally while leading prayers. His name is household all over the Muslim world for bravery. I have myself heard even non-Muslims of the Indo-Pak sub-continent invoking blessings from his name while entering the arena for sports.

[2]The Prophet of Islam.

[3]The equivalent of 'Yadullah'

[4]Another title of Ali.

[5]One with whom Allah is pleased.

[6]The Father of Dust.

[7]The Prophet made the sun turn back to enable him to offer his afternoon prayers which he would otherwise have missed having fallen asleep in Ali's lap.

[8]Khyber The stronghold of the Jews which Ali stormed and conquered

[9]Kausar: A spring in paradise

[10]The Prophet said: "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate."

[11]Abraham, the Patriarch Prophet, was thrown into a burning pyre by Namrod but escaped absolutely unscathed. The flames and live coals were turned by Allah into flowers

[12]Refers to the covenant of man with Allah at the time of creation Man offered and agreed to shoulder responsibilitis of carrying the mission of Allah while the other creatures shirked from it

XI

THE STORY OF A YOUNG MAN FROM MERVE WHO PRESENTED HIMSELF BEFORE SYED MAKHDOOM [1] ALI HUJVIRI (MAY GOD HAVE MERCY ON HIM) AND COMPLAINED OF OPPRESSION BY HIS FOES

The saint revered of Hujvir
Master of peoples all
Whose tomb was the sanctuary
For saint of Sanjar's call.

He teared down with full ease
The mountain-barriers, walls,
Began in this sub-continent
Islamic prayers' calls

The (glorious) age of Omar Farooq
His beatitude revived
His words exalted fame of Truth
It flourished and it thrived.

The guardian of the honour of
The [2] Fundamental Book
The house of falsehood fell in ruins
With his very look

The lowly tract of the Punjab
Gained life from breath of his
Our morning got its splendour from
His radiant sun's bliss.

A lover was he as well as
Love's courier volatile
And glistened from his forehead
Love's mysteries (with their smile).

Narrate here I a story
Of his perfection (true)
A garden whole enfold I
In a single bud, too!

A young man, whose height was
Like that of a cypress-tree
From the town of Merve arrived in
Lahore - (the Saint's city).

Presented himself he before
The august master-saint
So that the sur may cast aside
His darkness, (deep and faint).

Said he "I am encircled by
The forces of my foes
I am but like a frail flask
In the midst of stones' (throws).

Teach unto me, O monarch
Of heavenly abode!
How should this life be lived in
The midst of enemy's horde"

The wise preceptor, being whose
In beauty stood combined
With bond of kindly love and
With majesty refined.

Replied. "You! The stranger to
The secret of this life
So ignorant of its origin
And end of all the strife.

Please rid yourself of fear
Of others, who-so-be
You are a latent sleeping force
Rouse yourself, wakeful, (free).

When a stone in self-delusion
Deems itself to be a glass
It turns as frail as glass itself
And joins the breaking class.

If a wayfarer considers himself
In disposition weak
His cash of very life himself
To highway-man does leak.

How long will you consider yourself
Mere water, sheer clay
Out of your clay create yourself
Sinai's Flame you may

Why have a heavy head due to
Your rue for mighty men
Why you complain incessantly
Of enemies' attitude then.

Take it from me, your enemy
Is, also, your friend
Existence his shows your bazaar's
Hustle-and-bustle's trend.

Whoever knows reality of
The status of the Self
Considers it God's blessing
If the foe owns power, pelf.

For farm of man, the enemy
Is like unto a cloud
From slumber deep arouses
Potentialities proud.

The blocking stone means water
If you in spirit are strong
For flood to wreck the ups and downs
Of paths, would it be wrong?

The stumbling-block is whetting stone
For resolution's sword
Its lacking furies, stage by stage,
To it its trials afford.

To eat, to slumber like the beast
Of what use? What avail?
If yourself you are'nt strong and stout
Your life is useless, (frail)!

Then when you strengthen yourself with
The Self's might and force
If you desire, you can upset
The world's entire course.

If decimation you desire
Become of yourself free
If life ever-lasting is your aim
In the Self inhabited be.

For what is death except to be
Oblivious of the Self
What do you think what death is?
Soul's flight from body itself?

In the Self create a place your own
Like [3] Joseph (did before)
Walk easily from capativity
To emperorship (of yore).

Think deep (and steep yourself in) the Self
And man of action be
Be man of God truly
That mysteries dwell in thee"

The deeper meanings I explain
With stories' help indeed
The bud I cause to blossom
With force of breath ('s speed).

" 'Tis meet and proper, better that
Beloveds' secrets find
A mention in stories of
Others" (of their kind) [4]

[1]Syed Ali Hujviri (Died 1078 A D) popularly known as Data Ganj Bakhsh lies buried at Lahore One of the greatest saints of Islam. He was the author of the world-famous "Kashful Mahjub", a treatise on Sufism Khawaja Muinuddin Chishti (Died 1235 A D) of Ajmer originally of Sanjar in Persia visited his grave and remained closetted in a room close-by busy in worship in the spiritual vicinity of the saint.

[2]The Quran.

[3]Refers to Prophet Joseph's rise to emperorship of Egypt

[4]Quotation from Mathnavi of Maulana Rum.

XII

STORY OF A BIRD THAT WAS RESTLESSLY FAINT WITH THIRST

A bird was faint with thirst (extreme)
He tossed so restlessly
Like waves of smoke the breath heaved
In him so recklessly

He spied a piece of diamond
In the garden green
The thirst created 'fore him
(The wished-for) water's scene.

Deceived by the piece which was
Brilliant like the sun
The foolish bird took the stone for
Water (on its run)

He did not get the sought for
Moisture from the gem
He pecked it with his beak but
No drop to the throat would stem.

The diamond said "O greedy one!
Prisoner of your desire!
You've whetted on me your beak which is
Full of greed entire!

A drop of water I am not
Nor serve do I the wine
Nor is my living for others meant
Nor is existence mine

If you intend to do me harm
You are, for sure, mad
To self-revealing life you are
So foreign, (in your fad).

My water, that's my lustre
Breaks many a beak of the bird
It also breaks the gem of soul
Of the man of the world!"

Failing in its desire to
Quench palate as he wished
The bird, turned then its face away
From the diamond (dished)

His chest became the dwelling of
Saddening deep despair
And from his throat there burst forth
A wail, plaintive, rare.

A dew-drop on the tip of
The twig of a rose-tree
Was shining like the tear that
In nightingale's eye be

Its glitter it owed entirely
To munificence of the sun
Its body shivered in fear of
The sun (- it could not shun.)

A star, albeit, transient
And yet of heaven born
Which out of urge to self-reveal
For a moment stood, for-lorn.

A hundred times deceived by
The bud as well the rose
To it from life around it
No profit ever arose.

So very like the tear of
A lover, alone, love-lorn
For ever ready to drop from
Eyelash it does adorn.

The sorely distressed bird arrived
Beneath the branch of rose
Right in his mouth the dew-drop
Trickled (as healing doze).

O you whose sole desire is
To rid your life of a foe!
I ask you, "Are you a dew-drop
Or a diamond full of glow?"

As the bird was as though melting with
The fire of his thirst
Sustain itself it did, but
Another life it burst.

The dew-drop had no body hard
Nor gem-like nature had
The piece of diamond 'being' owned
The dew-drop sorely lacked.

Neglect not for a moment sole
Your Self's protection then
Be piece of diamond rather than
A dew-drop, (in a glen).

Be solid, massive, mighty
Much like a mountain is
Be bearer of a hundred clouds
Pour down the rivers' bliss

Salvage yourself, for sure, through
Affirming of the Self
Your quick-silver compress into
The silver-ore itself.

Produce a melody out of
The chord of your own Self
Unfold and expose fully
The secrets of own Self.

XIII

STORY OF THE DIAMOND AND THE COAL

I open once again a door
Of fact, of actual truth
To you hereunder I narrate
Another tale forsooth.

In a certain mine the coal addressed
The diamond in words these:
"O trustee of everlasting splendours!
(Tell me, tell me, please!).

We have been comrades ever,
Our past and present is one
And in this world the origin of
Existence ours is one

I breathe my last in the mine itself
In anguished worthlessness
You perch on the crested crown of
The emperors' worthiness.

Rated am I less than the dust
So vile is stuff of mine
Your beauty rends the heart of
A mirror superfine.

My blackness only illuminates
A censer with its peat
Perfection of my substance lies
In incineration's feat.

My head is trampled underneath
The feet of every one
On stocks of my existence
Heaps ashes every one.

On meanish lock, stock, barrel mine
Tears should be shed
The wherewithal of my being
Can you be to it led?

It is the wavelet of a smoke
Inextricably bound
Repository of just one spark
Transient and unsound.

While you are like the very stars
In features, nature alike
All your facets, resplendence
Beam forth, and eyes strike!

Some time you are the light of
The Kaiser's very eye
Another, you embellish
The hilt of daggers sly!"

Replied to him the diamond
"Comrade caviller mine!
Dark dust, perfecting hardness,
Became a bezel fine.

It is in war perpetual
With its environment
The struggle turns it into stone
Hard and permanent.

My form due to this hardness
Has been endowed with light
My bosom is inhabited by
The splendour, shining bright

Debased you are because of
Your immaturity
You burn only because of
Softness of entity.

Live, shedding all the fears,
The sorrows and the whim
Acquire hardness of a stone
And live like diamond (trim)."

Who ever is industrious
Whose grip and hold is tight
From him derive this world
And the next, their shining light.

The [1] Black Stone's core is nothing but
A handful of this dust
Which out of Ka'ba's pocket
Its head, as if, has thrust.

Its rank is higher far than
The file of Mount Sinai
Recipient of kisses it is
From black, red, low and high.

It is, sure, in solidity
That life's honour lies
Weakness and worthlessness are both
Immaturity ('s guise).

[1]The sacred stone fixed in a corner of the Ka'ba's wall v
the pilgrims kiss.

XIV

STORY OF THE SHEIKH AND THE BRAHMIN AND THE DIALOGUE OF THE GANGES AND THE HIMALAYAS TO BRING OUT THE MEANING THAT THE CONTINUATION OF NATIONAL LIFE LIES IN HOLDING FAST TO THE CHARACTERISTIC NATIONAL TRADITIONS

In the city of Benares lived
A Brahmin, venerable being
His intellect deep immersed in
The ocean of Being, Un-being.

He had abundant knowledge of
Philosophy (of old)
Despite, to the seekers of God
He was so well-disposed.

Possessed he was of a grasping mind
He strived in avenues new
His intellect rubbed shoulders with
Pleiades (- high it flew.)

Like that of the Phoenix
His nest was very high
The sun, the moon, like rue itself
His flaming thought did fry.

For long his flask beset itself
In (labour, sweat and) blood
Yet the cup-bearer of philosophy
His cup with wine didn't flood.

In learning's, sciences' garden
Many a snare he set
His snare's eye the sight of
His ideal bird didn't get

That notwithstanding, nail of
His thoughts in blood was steeped,
The knot of Being, Un-being
Remained untied, indeed.

To his deprive and despair was
His sigh-on-lip witness
His countenance betrayed in full
His heart in sore distress.

One day he went to the presence of
A Sheikh – par excellence
Who in his bosom had brought up
A heart – (and rancour sans).

He lent his ear to the speech
Of that sagacious saint
He set the seal of silence
On his lips, (for him quaint).

Thus spake the Sheikh: "O ambler
Of heavens swirling high!
For just a little while pledge
Yourself to earth (so nigh.)

So that you may then roam about
In desert and forest
Your thought intrepid has traversed
The limits of heaven ('s crest).

Attune yourself to this earth
O rambler of the skies!
Waste not yourself in search of
The gem that in stars lies.

I don't advise: be weary of
These idols of your own
The infidel that you have been
[1] Thread-girdle don't disown.

O you who are the trustee of
The civilization old
Turn not away from the fathers' path
To it you faster hold.

If a nation's life depends upon
Togetherness, unity
Then unity is also capital
Of infidelity.

You who in infidelity
Are not yet perfect so
Are unfit and unworthy
Around your heart to go

Far far have both of us strayed
From path of resignation
You're far from [2] Azar's, while, I
From Abraham's destination.

Our Qais is not in deep love
Of (Laila's camel's) litter
In madness of (heart-rending) love
Perfection lacks he bitter.

If flickers its last the candle of
The Self within its being
What is the use of fancy that
Goes measuring skies (' ceiling)."

In the skirt of the mountain range when
The harp touched music moist
The River Ganges said one day
To the Himalayas high hoist:

"O shoulders whose have carried snow
From the creation's dawn!
Form whose, of numberless rivers
The thread-girdle does don!

Co-sharer has God made you
Of mysteries of the sky
Deprived you but of feet which
In graceful gait might vie.

He snatched away from your feet
The power to tread and walk
This dignity, this loftiness
This sedateness? Mere talk!

The crux of life lies in
Perpetually moving on
The sheet-anchor of 'being's wave
Is from motion drawn.

From the river when the mountain
Heard this (sly simmering) taunt
He breathed in anger like is
A sea of fire's wont.

Replied he: "You, whose expanse
Is but my looking-glass
In bosom mine lie hidden
A hundred of your class.

This graceful gait of yours
Is death's own instrument
Who so ever for-sakes his Self
For death is fully meant.

In utter ignorance are you
Of station of your own
You gloat over your misfortune,
You fool! To self unknown!

O you, born of the womb of
[3] Reveling heaven high!
Than you are far far better
Low coasts that fallen lie.

An offering of your being,
You've made to the ocean deep
Your cash of soul to a brigand
You've offered in a heap.

Like the rose in a garden
Guard your own self-respect
Don't run after the florist for
Perfume-spreading prospect.

Life stands for growth of the Self but
Rooted right in its place
And for picking of the flowers
From own flower-bed, with grace.

Ages have gone by but I stand
Foot-rooted to my soil
You guess that from my goal I
Am far away, re-coil.

My being, however, has grown
To reach the heaven high
That Pleiades under this my skirt
Is pleased in rest to lie.

While your being is traceless
In the ocean deep
Prostrate the stars on the crest of
My top, aloft and steep.

My eyes see so clearly
The mysteries of the heights
My ears are acquainted with
The sound of angel's flights!

Consume myself incessantly
With heat of toil I
Treasures of rubies, diamonds
And gems I have lain by

My kernel is of stone and
Inside the stone is fire
Across my fire dare not pass
Water (though roused in ire).

Even if a drop, you should not drip
On feet, be they your own
With the tossing waves toil,
Against oceans hold your own.

Desire the lustre of a gem
Be yourself jewel's piece
For ears of a beauty
Be pendants (eyes please).

Expand yourself to boundlessness
Or gain a limitless speed
Or be the cloud that lightning throws,
Pours rivers-full rain, indeed!

So that the sea solicits from you
For storms in a beggar's way
And sulkingly complains of
Its skirt ('s narrow bay).

So that it deems itself to be
Far lesser than a wave
And glides softly by your feet"
(It's led to so behave!)

[1]The Hindus wear a thread-girdle across the shoulder and groin

[2]Azar was the father of Abraham He was an idol-maker while Abraham was an idol-breaker.

[3]The Hindus believe that Ganges rises in heaven

XV

EXPOSING THAT THE AIM AND OBJECT OF MUSLIM'S LIFE IS TO EXALT THE WORD C ALLAH AND THAT IF THE JEHAD IS MOTIVATE BY HUNGER FOR CONQUEST OF LAND, IT UNLAWFUL IN ISLAM

Soak deeply all your heart with
[1] Allah's perfect dye
To love give honour and chastity
Which tell: it's time to die.

Through love the Muslim's temperament
Learns to dominate
If the Muslim is not loving
He's infidel innate.

His seeing and not-seeing is
Obeisence all to God
His eating, drinking, sleeping are
All for the sake of the Lord.

With his sweet pleasure merged is
The (dictate), will of God
'This saying to believe in
To people may look odd'.

His tent is pitched in the field of
"No-god-except-the Lord"
In this world he's commissioned to be
On man, witness of God.

The witness of his status true
Is the Prophet of men and jinn –
The witness most truthful
Shall be, is, and has been.

Pass from the stage of mere words
Knock at the spiritual door
The light of truth on darkness
Of your actions pour.

In the kingly robes of the Chosroe
Durvish – like you should live
With eyes ever wakeful
On God meditating live.

The nearness of God should be
The goal of every deed
So that in you be manifest
His Glory Great, indeed!

For peace becomes turmoil
If, its aim is, aught else
If seeking God its object is
War is virtue, naught else.

If Truth is not exalted by
Our scimitar, our sword
War brings with it for people
Misfortunes, (woe's horde).

His holiness [2] Sheikh Mian Mir
(That saint of eminent name)
With the light of whose (ennobling) soul
All hidden things earned fame.

On the path of Mohammed Mustafa
His feet did firmly plant
Impassioned song of his love
Reed-flute did ever chant.

His tomb is the very faith of
The dust of our city
The torch of the light of guidance
For the whole vicinity.

On his door even the sky its brow
Bows down in reverence
One of his many disciples was
Of emperor's eminence.

This emperor sowing in his heart
The seed of greed, ambition
Resolved in mind, some countries
To bring to his submission.

With avarice, with ambition deep
His soul was all aflame
[3]"Are there any more left"
He taught his sword: 'proclaim' !

At that time in the Deccan
There was a turmoil great
His armies were in battle-field
There was a war-like state.

Repaired he to the Sheikh of
Rank, dignity true sky-high
To seek his prayers and blessings
To be re-inforced thereby.

A Muslim from the world towards
The Lord takes resort
With prayer he always strengthens
His strategy, planning's part.

On listening to the emperor
The Sheikh silence assumed –
The assemblage of durvishes
All ears became attuned.

With a silver coin in his hand
Disciple one did dare
To open up his lips and thus
The seal of silence tear.

Said he: "O please accept this
Poor lowly offering mine
O guider-by-the-hand of
Those strayed from God's line!

My body dived and delved in
The habit of labour hard
Before my skirt could tie a knot
On just one dirham odd."

Replied the Sheikh: "This money is
Our Sultan's rightful due
Who in the robes imperial
Is a beggar (and not new).

Although he holds under his sway
The sun, the moon, the stars
Our emperor is most indigent
Of mankind (– hold no bars.)

His eye is fixed on food laid out
On others' table indeed
The fire of his hunger has
Thrown people in great need

His sword is followed all around
By famine and by plague
His lust for building has laid waste
Towns, countries, known or vague.

All folks are uttering wails and cries
Because of poverty his
Forces his empty-handedness
To plunder the weak, that is.

His prowess is the enemy of
The people dwelling this earth
Mankind is the caravan
That gives this brigand mirth.

Due to his self-delusion and
His immature thought
His pillages he is proud of
Names them as conquests wrought.

His own imperial troops may be
Or be they enemies' troops
Are cut in twain by hunger of
His sword – yes! both the groups

The fire that consumes him
Is the beggar's hunger own
While hunger of an emperor means:
State, faith, before dogs thrown.

Who-ever draws his dagger for
Aught other than God's own cause
This very dagger in his chest
Shall come to rest and pause!"

[1]Refers to the Quranic verse. "What is better than the dye (baptism) of Allah"

[2]A saint of seventeenth century buried at Lahore

[3]Reference to the Quranic Verse wherein hell has been forecast to ask" Are there any more" (of the sinners)?

XVI

ADVICE PENNED DOWN BY MIR [1] NAJAT ALIAS BABA-I-SEHRAI FOR THE MUSLIMS OF INDIA

O you! who like a rose have grown
Out of this earth's soil
Take it that from the womb of the Self
You, too, are born (in toil).

Abandon not the Self, attain
An ever-lasting end
Be but a drop of water, which
Has ocean – drinking trend.

You! who are radiant due to
The Self's (brilliant) light
Firm up the Self within yourself
Attain e'er-lasting height.

All profit lies in the pocket of
This very trade, transaction
In guarding this commodity lies
Masterly distinction.

You are Being and yet you are
Of Un-Being afraid
O you! My dear dear friend!
All wrong 'fore you 'tis laid.

As I am fully acquainted with
The harmony of life
I shall impart to you what is
The secret of this (strife).

It is diving within yourself –
Like ever does a pearl –
And thereafter from solitude
Your head outside to hurl.

It is to store the tiny sparks
Beneath the ashes cold
Become and rise up like a flame
Too dazzling to behold.

Be burner of the house built
With forty years of labour
Perambulate around yourself
Like a circling flame endeavour.

For what is life but weaning self
From circling around others
Regard yourself as the Ka'ba
(Have self-respecting covers.)

Your wings you beat and thus be free
Of gravity of this earth
Like unto birds be safe from
A fall back on this earth.

O you alert and sensible one!
If a bird you are not
Right on the top of a mountain's cave
You build your nest should not.

O you! who so much after
Acquiring knowledge are!
The (Script of) Rumi's message I
Deliver to you (at par).

"If knowledge you have wound around
Your body – it's a snake
But if imbued your heart with it
A friend of you it'll make".

Of the Master of Rum's story
You've heard, are you aware?
Who, in Aleppo city,
Discoursed on knowledge rare.

Bound by the feet with chain of
Logic of intellect
His boat was in the midst of
Dark storms of intellect.

A Moses entirely foreign to
The Sinai of love
Unknown to love completely
And to passion of love.

He spoke of [2]scepticism and he
Spoke of illumination[3]
A hundred pearls he strung of
Metaphysical notation.

He unravelled the skeins of
The [4]Peripatetics' premise
The beam of light of his thought
Laid bare each light surmise.

Before him, all around him, were
Thick piles and heaps of books
And from his lips flowed commentaries
On books (like running brooks).

Directed by mentor [5] Kamal
[6] Shams of Tabriz sought
The way to the college of [7] Jalal
Where he discoursed and taught.

Enquired he: "What noise is this
This reasoning, wrangling thus
Imagination, analogy
Deductive logic's fuss?"

The Maulvi ordered: "O you fool!
You better shut your mouth
On doctrines of old sages
Don't laugh, O you uncouth!

Lift up your feet and out you go
Of the colleges' premises
This logic is too high for you
You've no concern with this.

Our discourses are too abstract
Beyond your understanding
Perception's glass is brighter made
(If they get proper listening)."

This utterance of the Mulla caused
Fervour of Shams to grow
The fire that hid in his soul
Began to openly glow.

On the earth, the lightning of
His looks, when he cast
The spark arising from his breath
From dust caused flame to blast.

The spiritual fire of the heart
Perception's stock-pile burnt
And clean consumed the library
Where that logician had learnt.

Rank stranger as the Maulvi was
To the miracle of Love
Completely unacquainted with
The orchestra of Love.

Cried out: (in utter disbelief)
"How did you light this fire
The library of philosophers
You have thus burnt entire?"

Spake thus the Sheikh: "O Muslim,
But in thread-girdle bound!
This all is verve and ecstacy
You should not fool around!

Our ecstacy is far higher than
Your intellectual thought
Our flame is this red alchemy
(Which all this state has brought).

With the snow of your philosophy
Your substance you create
From cloud of your intellect
Cold hail-storm (pours in spate).

Enkindle a fire yourself
From rubble of your own
Stoke up a flame yourself
From earth to yourself known.

Perfected is a Muslim's ken
By fervour of his heart
Islam means: renouncing everything
Ephemeral, whole or part.

As Abraham[8] did free himself
From bond of all things setting
Right in the midst of blazing flames
He was seen prettily sitting.

You've thrown behind and cared not for
The knowledge of Truth, of God
For the sake of just one loaf of bread
You've squandered Faith in God.

You are in search and hot pursuit
Of antimony pure
But with your own dark eye
You're un-acquainted, sure

Seek the fountain of Life from
The sharp edge of a dagger
And from the mouth of a python
The Heavens' Kausar River.

The Black Stone you demand from
The door of idol-house
And the musk-deer's bladder in
A mad dog arouse.

But glow of Love you should not seek
In the knowledge of to-day
Nor nature of the Truth search in
This infidel's cup you may.

For long have I engrossed myself
In running to and fro
And I have learnt the secret of
New knowledge and (its flow).

Its gardeners all have put me to
Its trial and its test
And thus of this rose-garden
Imparted knowledge best.

It is'nt a roses' bed but is
Of tulips, of moral grave
Like a paper-flower which is
Perfume's mirage, you crave.

But ever since I 've freed myself
From this garden's thrall
I've built myself a nest on
Heaven's [9] Tooba tall.

This so-called modern knowledge is
But the greatest veil
It moulds the idols, worships them
And lays them out for sale.

In the prison of phenomena
Its feet are tightly bound
From the limits of the sensible•
It does not leap and bound.

It has lost its foot-hold
On life's thorough fare
On its own gullet it has
Placed a dagger bare.

It has a fire which is dead cold
Like that of a tulip's fire
It has a flame which is dead cold
Like a hail-stone (dire.)

.Its nature remains free of
The touch of glow of love
In this discoveries-hungry world
It lies (in) joyless (cove.)

Love is the Plato heals which
All maladies of mind
Its lancet cures melancholy
Of mind (, so all will find).

The Universe bows, prostrates
Before Love, paying homage
Love is [10] Mahmood and intellect is
Somnath (he did ravage.)

The flask of intellect does'nt hold
In it that wine old
It's not the luck of its nights to
Resound with 'Lord! My Lord!'

The value of your box-tree
You did not realise
On cypresses of others
You placed a higher prize.

Like the reed you have emptied
Your own self of the Self
On musical notes of others
You've set your heart itself.

O beggar of mere crumbs from
Others' tables' foods!
Your own wares you are looking for
From others' stalls of goods.

The banquet-hall of a Muslim is
Burnt up by others' lamp
His mosque reduced to ashes by
A spark from a Convent ('s camp).

From the sanctuary of the Ka'ba
No sooner a deer fled
Than the arrow of a hunter
Its sides did thread and shred.

The rose-petals are scattered
Like unto its own scent
O you who fled from your self!
Come back to where you're meant!

O trustee of the wisdom of
The Prototype of the Book!
You are but a lost unity
For it again you look.

We were the guardians of the gates
Of the fortress of Islam
Infidels have become, giving up
The mottos of Islam.

The Saqi old at the hands of
His own cup lies shattered
Wine-party of the Hijazians
Stands broken up and scattered.

The Ka'ba is inhabited by
The idols of our own
Mocks at us infidelity, for
The Islam we've shown.

The sheikh for lust of idols has
His Islam gambled away
And strung the beads of rosary
In the thread-of-girdle, yea!

Preceptors are preceptors now
Because of hair white
They have become the laughing stock
Of urchins, naughty, spright.

Their hearts are utter strangers to
Impress of "There's-no-god"
The idols of sensuality
Have made them houses odd.

Each long-haired person dons now
The Durvish-like robe
Alas for all these mendicants
Of religion (on this globe).

With coterie of their disciples
Travelling day and night
Unaware of the needs besetting Islam
Grave be or be these slight

Their eyes are but lack-lustre
Narcissus-like these are
Devoid of all the spiritual wealth
Their hearts and bosoms are.

The preachers as well mystics
Worship the wordly rank
The "radiant nation's" prestige
To lowest depth has sank.

Our preacher's gaze is fixed on
Pagoda, idol-house
The [11] Mufti of the Manifest Faith
Sells verdicts (and with grouse.)

What then, O friends! be after this
Our strategy, our plan?
Our Preceptor has set on course
To (break) the tavern ('s ban.)

[1] As Nicholson has noted, this appears to be a pseudonym assumed by Iqbal as enquiries from various knowledgeable persons and references to books have led to no clue of Mir Najat. Nor did Iqbal deny the assumption of Nicholson

[2] Ancient or modern Pyerhonism, denying truth of religions and taking cynical view

[3] The philosophy of Suhrawardy (Died 1191) who synthesised the Neo-Platonic and Persian philosophies etc. signifying light with goodness and darkness with evil

[4] The followers of Aristotle who used to walk in Lyceum while teaching.

[5] Sheikh Kamal-ud-Din Junaidi.

[6] Jalal-ud-Din Rumi's mentor

[7] Maulana Rumi

[8] Abraham saw the star, the moon, the sun and took each in turn to be worship-worthy But when he found each one setting, he cried out "I love not them that set" Quran, Chapter VI, V. 76.

[9] A tree in the highest of Heavens.

[10] Mahmood of Ghazni, an iconoclast king of Afghanistan and vast neighbouring territories including part of eleventh and twelfth century India who led an invasion to destroy the biggest and most famous idol installed in Somnath by the Hindus.

[11] Muslim jurist

XVII

TIME IS A SWORD

May the holy grave of Shafiee[1]
Remain lush green for ever
A world remains so cheered up
By his old vine's flavour.

His thought plucked the very stars
From the heavens high
He called Time: "The cutting sword"
(In ages gone by).

What shall I say then what is
The secret of this sword
Its furbushing derives its all
From life ('s spiritual hoard).

Its owner is imperturbable
By hope as well as fear
Than [2] hand of Moses hand of his
Shines more in radiance sheer

With just one stroke of his sword
From stones [3] gush springlets out
The sea turns into land dry
Without a moisture's clout

In the hands of Prophet Moses
The sword was this, self same
So what he wrought was higher than
What men contrive and name.

The broad chest of the Red Sea
He clove and rent asunder
A very ocean he dried up
Like land itself (, no wonder!)

Hand-hold of [4] Haider which unhinged
Fortress of Khyber's gate
His power's source was also
This very sword's legate.

The revolution of the sky
Is worthy to be seen
Vicissitudes of days and nights
Intelligible have been. —

Captive of Morrows, Yesterdays!
Within yourself look!!
Another universe lies hid
In your own heart's nook.

In your own soil you have sown
The seed of deep darkness
And Time, you have taken for
A straight line (more or less).

Then with the measuring tape of
The night and the day
With thought of yours please survey
The length of Time's sway.

This line you have made into
Thread-girdle of your waist
You have become a trader of
Falsehood, like idols (waste)

You were alchemy but you became
A handful mere of dust
Born of the truth's own conscience
Grown into falsehood ('s crust).

If you are a Muslim, rid yourself
Free of this girdle-thread
Become the focal candle of
The feast where free men tread.

You who are unaware of
The origin of the Time
Completely ignorant you are
Of life ever-lasting ('s clime.)

Then how long will you thus remain
Captive of day and night
Learn of the Time's mystery from:
"With God, [5] I have a tryst."

Phenomena all arise from
The speed, the march of Time
Life is but just one mystery
Of mysteries of Time.

Time's origin does not lie in
Revolving of the sun
For Time is ever-lasting
There's sun ever-lasting none.

For, Time is joy and sorrow
It is martyr's day, it is [6] Eed
It is the moonlight's secret
Of the sun light, indeed!

You have extended Time, like
The space (in span, expanse)
Created a distinction in
The past and future ('s stance).

You who have fled like the fragrance
From your garden own!
With your own hands thus you have built
A prison wherein you're thrown.

This Time of ours which has'nt seen
The beginning or the end
In avenue of our conscience
Its sprouting does depend.

The knowledge intimate of it
The living, makes 'live more
Existence his, than the morning
More brilliant, shining more.

Life is of Time's origin
And Time of Life, indeed
"Do not abuse the Time" advised
The Prophet (in fact, in deed.)

A point may I make 'fore you
As brilliant as a pearl
Between the slave and freeman
Distinction to unfurl.

A slave is rendered idle
In Time's night and day
While in the heart of a free man
Time's idle (in decay).

A slave weaves his burial-shroud
With hands to him well-known
Warps he around his body ('s flesh)
The day's and night's thread own.

A freeman disentangles
Himself from soil and clay
And warps himself on the loom of
The night and the day.

A slave is like a bird caught
In the snare of morn and eve
The taste of flight from his soul
In this way takes leave.

The freeman's chest in which flows
His breath so fast and free
Makes it for bird of nights and days
A cage (as close may be.)

A slave's nature, however, is
To get his harvest's due
His life's incidents are
Without turns new.

His drowsy-headed awakening
Is always all the same
His wails and mournings, morn and eve
Unchanged – (O what a shame!).

Moment by moment creation new
Is freeman's handi-work
And harmonies flowing ever-new
Are his chord's, lyre's work.

His nature does'nt bear bother of
A repititious role
His path is not the circle drawn
By compass, whole and sole.

For the slave the Time is nothing else
Than shackle, that is all
From lips of his complaints of Fate
In mornings, evenings fall.

Ambition of a freeman
Becomes of death adviser
The events take their shape from
The hands of this deviser.

His past as well as future
Are present in his present
Delays as well postponements
His promptness makes unpleasant.

This purest poesy comes to me
Without a noise or voice
It does sink right into the mind
It's no perception's choice.

I speak and words – my own words
Fight shy of meanings clear
Complain the meanings, however, of
Words I must clear steer.

The living meanings, enter they
As soon a word, they die
And with the coldness of your breath,
With fire extinguished lie.

Secret of absence, presence
Lies in-side the heart
Secret of Time, its passage
Lies right within the heart.

A silent song sighs within
The symphony of the Time
Dive deep in the heart that you may see
The secret of the Time.

And, ah! The wishful memory
Of days the sword of Time
By dint of our sinewy arm
With us was well in rhyme.

The seed of Faith in the farm of
Full many a heart we sowed
Removed we from the cheeks of Truth
The veil· (behind it glowed).

Our nail untied the knot of
(The problems of) this world
Our bow to the dust of this earth
Brought to it lucky word.

From jar of Truth we caused this
Wine, rose-coloured, to gush
On ancient taverns charged by night
(The putrid wine to flush)

O you who hold the old wine
Now even in your flask!
Your wine's heat to the glass may
Perform the fire's task!

On account of pride and vanity
And arrogance, self-conceit
You hurl these taunts at us
In poverty's retreat.

Our goblet has also adorned
The banquets full of zest
A living heart once lively throbbed
In this our own broad chest.

The modern time embellished with
All of its splendours new
Has, in real truth, arisen from
Our own feet's dust-cloud ('s clue).

The farm of Truth was watered by
Naught else but our blood
The worshippers of Truth are
Beholden to our (blood).

It's we who taught unto the world
Exalting God the Great
From our (rewarding) clay it was
That sanctuaries earned their fate.

Commandment; "Read" it was to us
That Allah taught us first
Through our hands His bounties
He distributed first

Although from our hand are gone
The signet and the crown
At us – the poor beggars –
Contemptuously do'nt frown.

At Present, in your eyes
Whatever we do brings loss
Our thoughts are old, out-dated
Disgraced (we lost our gloss.)

We still sustain our honour from
"There-is-no-god-but-Allah"
We keep a watch on both worlds with
("There-is-no-god-but-Allah").

Free are we from the sorrows of
To-day and of the morrow
We have pledged ourselves to the One
In love with lovers' vow.

We are the hidden mystery
In the Heart of the Truth!
We are the heirs of Moses
And of Aaron, forsooth!

The sun and moon are even now
Bright due to our light
And lightnings still lurk freely in
Our cloud (, however, slight.)

Our essence is the mirror of
The quintessence Divine
A Muslim's being is but one
Of myriad signs divine.

[1] Mohammad bin Idrees Ashshafiee (767 to 820 A.D.). **Born in** Ghaza, buried in Egypt Studied in Mecca and went over to **Baghdad and** then back to Egypt He was the first of the four **well-known jurist Imams.** the other three being Imam Hanbal, Imam **Abu Hanifa and Imam Malik.** Author of a number of well-known books among which is **'Kitab-ul-Um'.** His followers are spread over North Africa and Indonesia.

[2& 3] Refer to the miracles granted by God to be **performed by** Moses

[4] One of the names of Ali

[5] This is the Holy Prophet's Tradition

[6] Muslim festivals after Ramadan and Haj

[7] The very first revelation of the Quran to the Prophet

XVIII

AN INVOCATION

In the frame-work of this universe
Like soul in body free
You dwell in our souls yet
From us You always flee!

Your Grace alone it is which breathes
Music in the lute of life
If it be for your sake alone
Death is envy of life

Once more grant pacification
To hearts unhappy ours
Once more within our bosom
Inhabit for ageless hours

Once more, O please! demand from us
Respect for honour, fame
Once more strengthen hearts of
These lovers only in name.

Often do we complain of
Our destiny, our fate
We are extremely indigent
Yours is the highest rate

The empty-handed that we are
Hide not from us Your face
Grant gratis to us love that was
Bilal's, Salman's grace

Give us those sleepless eyes
Grant us a passionate heart
Once more grant us the nature of
The quick-silver's own art

Of signs manifest endless
Please, show us but one sign
So that the necks of enemies
Down earth-wards do incline

Turn this, the chaff, into a mount
Its crest spitting fire –
With the fire within us burn please
All other-than-God entire

When the thread of its unity
The nation left from hand
A hundred knots developed
In our mission, our stand.

Scattered are we in this world
Like stars in the sky
Although we breathe in unison
Like strangers we pass by

Once more, O please! bind us
The scattered leaves we are
Once more, O please! revive in us
The spirit of love (lost far!)

Once more, O please appoint us to
Be at Your beck and call
Let the carrying out of Your mission
On Your lovers fall.

To wayfarers provide with
The goal of resignation
Bestow upon us Abraham's
Faith's determination.

Teach love pre-occupation with
The crux of "La Ilah"
Teach it to be acquainted with
Secret of "Ill Allah".

I who so like a taper burn
Consume myself for others
My circle of friends, taper-like
I teach to weep for others

O Lord! The (warm) tear that
Enkindles (every) heart
Is full of passion, restless
And pushes comforts apart.

Could I sow in the garden
To grow into a fire
So that it washes away the red
From the tulip's attire.

My heart is rooted in the past
My eyes are fixed on the future
Right in the midst of company
Alone I sorrows nurture.

Each person takes himself, to be
A friend of mine for sure
But from within me did not leak
My secrets (, simple, pure.)

In this whole world, O my Lord
O where my comrade is
Where is the tree of my Sinai
And where my Moses is?

Trangressor am I, on myself
Did perpetrate wrongs I
A flame in my own arm-pit
Have fostered myself I.

A flame reducing to ashes
All wares of awareness
It grew into a fire
In the (vale) of awareness.

To reason and to intellect
Pure madness did it teach
It set on fire (all that
Repairs) knowledge ('s breach).

Its blaze has raised the sun to
These high heights in the sky
And lightnings are perpetually
Encircling it on high.

Like that of the dew I have become
A tear-shedding eye
Till have become the trustee of
The hidden fire I

The taper I have taught to
Burn itself, not to spare
Myself I burn all hidden
From the world's eyes' glare.

At last from every hair-root mine
Flames sprouted out
From even veins of my thoughts
Fire sprang about

My nightingale has picked out
The strain from very sparks
And given birth to a song that
A fiery temper harks

The bosom of my age is
Devoid of a heart
At Laila's litter's emptiness
Pain of Majnun grows smart.

For a candle it is easy not,
To burn, consume alone
Would that I had just one moth
To share my pain and moan.

How long to wait for a kindred soul
To hear and share my grief
How long to search for a sharer
Of secrets (of belief)

O You from Grace of whose Face!
The sun and moon get light
The fire infused in my soul
Withdraw from me You might.

Take back this trust, that You have put
In (burning) bosom mine
This rankling thorn of essence
Remove from mirror fine.

Or else grant me the company of
A comrade old (sincere)
To the world-consuming love thus give
A mirror (crystal clear)

Within the ocean, a wave moves
Along side a wave
To share each other's emotion
By nature do they crave

In heaven, one to the other star
A bosom-comrade is
On the very knee of the night rests
The moon fair head of his.

The day rubs its side against
The dark side of the night
To-day, itself, (mingles) with
To-morrow (hopeful, bright).

Existence of one brooklet
Loses its self in another's
The waft of wind gets also lost
In the sweet smell of others.

In every nook of wilderness
There is a (festive) dance
One madman with another is
Enjoying dance (and prance).

Although You in Your Essence
Are One, Uniquely One
A universe for Yourself
You have furnished, (all done).

I am, however, like unto
The tulip in a desert
In the midst of company, all around
Alone (— that is my desert.)

Of Grace of Yours I beg for
A friend, my alter ego
Who is fully acquainted with
My nature's secret (echo)

A bosom-friend who is at once
Devoid of sense yet wise
One who is utter stranger to
The phantoms' changing guise

So that I may infuse in him
My frenzied exclaimation
And see reflected in his heart
My face's presentation

His form then I may mould from
This handful clay of mine
So that to him I am Azar
As well as idol ('s shrine').